

JEEVADHARA

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DISCIPLESHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE MEANING OF DISCIPLESHIP IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Paul Savio Pudussery

DISCIPLESHIP IN THE LUCAN JOURNEY NARRATIVE

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ASPECTS OF DISCIPLESHIP IN THE
SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Joseph Pathrapankal

PAUL DISCIPLE AND APOSTLE OF CHRIST

Francis Pereira

BOOK REVIEW



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JEEVADHARA

The Word of God

DISCIPLESHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

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Editorial

What it means to be a Christian today is a highly relevant and challenging question, especially in a world so much secularised and self-conscious. It is relevant because a Christian living as he does in a 'world come of age' seeks his own authenticity as well as its realization in his day-to-day life. It is challenging because it affects a believer's life radically if he is to be sincere in his search for truth and objectivity. What very often happens is that an integrated Christian cannot at the same time hold fast to his convictions and lead a life unmindful of his commitments. Moreover, in the midst of the stress and strain of modern technocratic society we see faith and beliefs that are not solidly based crumbling down before our very eyes. We could even say that a crisis of faith is a universal phenomenon visible in all realms of life, whether secular, religious, social or political. However, the crisis of faith found among the Christians seems to be ultimately one of identity crisis, namely, the very identity of a Christian as related to their fellow men.

It is an undeniable fact that the identity of a Christian is to be seen and evaluated ultimately on the basis of his relation to the person of Jesus Christ. The relation of a believer to Jesus is expressed in the New Testament in diverse forms and ways. But the basic idea of being a Christian is contained in the concept of *discipleship* which is the theme of this issue of *Jeevadharma*. Our attempt is to search out the meaning and identity of discipleship as it is progressively revealed and developed in the various books of the New Testament. In the Gospels we find the Twelve (*Dodeka*) who with Jesus form the nucleus of the messianic community. But we also see that in the Gospels the concept of discipleship becomes more and more an inclusive and open one. Mark seems to confine it strictly to the group of the Twelve, whereas the other Synoptics and John apply it to a wider circle. In the New Testament, in general, anyone who believes in and accepts Jesus as the Lord, is a disciple. Our studies on the concept of discipleship in the New Testament are expected to throw light on what it means to be a Christian today, which has become for all of us a crucial question in this so-called 'post-Christian' era. It seems to be more and more an established conviction of seriously committed Christians that our basic and fundamental convictions should be derived from the Bible and not from any superficial and shallow analysis of human sciences. For ultimately it is the Word of God that has to tell the believers what they are and what they are not before the word of man can analyse it for them. Ever since D. Bonhoeffer wrote his *Cost of Discipleship* the biblical meaning of discipleship is a very much cherished area of modern christian spirituality.

I. The term “Disciple”

The Greek term for ‘disciple’ is *mathetes*, which is derived from the Greek verb *manthanein* which means “to learn”. Hence the basic meaning of the noun *mathetes* is “a learner” or “an apprentice”. In classical Greek literature *manthanein* denoted the process of acquiring theoretical knowledge and *mathetes* was the one devoted to Greek philosophical school. It was in the company of a *didaskalos*, “a master” or “teacher”, that one was called a *mathetes*.

1. Mathetes in the Old Testament

In the OT we do not find a direct parallel to the Greek system of discipleship. Hence the Greek translators of the Hebrew Bible did not find any instance where the Greek term *mathetes* was demanded. However, the verb *manthanein* is well represented in the Septuagint (55 times). *Manthanein* is used 28 times to render the Hebrew verb *lamad* which means “to learn”. Generally *manthanein* is used without any theological significance (e. g. Mic. 4:3; Is. 2:4; Ez. 19:3). But in few instances especially in Dt., *manthanein* has a religious significance. God has chosen his people Israel in order that they may “learn to fear Him” (Dt. 4:10; 14:23; 17:19; 31:12-13). Learning here involves the full understanding and the acceptance of the Torah which is nothing but the expression of God’s will (Dt. 30:14).

The Hebrew equivalent for *mathetes* is *talmid* which occurs only once in the OT, and that is in I Chron. 25:8. The reason for the lack of any OT vocabulary for a learner is to be found in Israelite faith as a religion of revelation. “In the sphere of revelation there is no place for the establishment of a master-disciple relation, nor is there the possibility of setting up a human word alongside the Word of God which is proclaimed”.¹

2. Mathetes in Judaism

In Judaism, on the contrary, there existed master-disciple (*Rabbi-talmid*) relationship. It was for the purpose of studying the Torah that a *talmid* attached himself to a Rabbi. According to Shammai the concern of the pupil is both the written Torah

1. Rengstorf, “*Mathetes*”, in *TDNT*, Vol. IV, p. 431.

(the biblical writings of the O. T.) and the oral Torah. It was the practice of Jesus' day that prospective disciples (*talmidim*) chose their master (*Rabbi*) and attached themselves to him. After the proper period of listening and learning from his master, a disciple could expect to become a rabbi himself, and if possible, a better one than his master. The word *talmidim* is used only of men. "Religiously women were on a lower level than men and could not give themselves to the work of teaching and learning" (Rengstorf). They were not taught the Torah, "May the words of the Torah be burned, they should not be handed over to women" (jSota, 10 a, 8)².

3. Mathetes in the New Testament

In the N. T. the term *mathetes* occurs only in the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles. In the Gospels it is used 234 times and in the Acts 28 times. Mark has used it 46 times in his Gospel. Generally the word *mathetes* denotes the men who have attached themselves to Jesus as their Master. But in few instances it is also used for the "disciples of John the Baptist" (Mk. 2:18 par.; Mt. 11:2 par.; Lk. 5:33; 11:1; Jn. 1:35, 37), the "disciples of Moses" (Jn. 9:28), the "disciples of the Pharisees" (Mk. 2:18 Par.; Mt. 22:16). There are some fundamental characteristics that distinguish the disciples of Jesus from the rabbinic disciples.

a. The first characteristic of the disciples of Jesus is that they are called by Him to discipleship. The initiative was always taken by Jesus in calling disciples to himself. Jesus invited men with the following words: *akolouthei moi* ("Follow me"—Mk. 2:14) or *deute opiso mou* ("Follow me"—literally, "come after me", Mk. 1:17). In Judaism it was the disciple who chose his Master and attached himself to him.

2. Against this background Mary's sitting at the Lord's feet and listening to his teaching (Lk. 10:39) is very significant. Both the posture and the reference to Jesus' teaching (*logos*) seem to imply religious instruction. It was not a conventional one for Jewish woman. But Jesus has crashed through many barriers as he related to women as persons. He talked openly with women which was contrary to established customs (cf. Jn. 4:27). And in Luke 10:39 we see Jesus as a teacher and Mary as a disciple.

b. The second characteristic of Jesus' disciples is that they cut off all their ties with the world and attach themselves exclusively to the Person and work of Jesus. In Judaism, on the contrary, a disciple attaches himself to his master solely for the purpose of studying the Torah together. But Jesus called his disciples not to impart information but to awaken and deepen unconditional commitment to Himself. It is to be noted that a disciple, as a follower of Christ, is also a learner (cf. Mt. 11:29, "Take my yoke upon you and *learn* from me"). But 'learning' is not what makes him a disciple. It is the following - the self-commitment involving severance from all other ties - that makes one a disciple of Christ (cf. Lk. 9:61-62; Mt. 8:22).³

c. A disciple of a Rabbi could expect to become a rabbi himself after a period of training and instruction. But a disciple of Jesus could never expect that some day he might become the Master. In Mt. 23:8-11 Jesus expressly forbids any expectation of the right to be addressed as "rabbi", "father", or "master". Jesus is the only "teacher" and "master".

d. The fourth characteristic is that Jesus calls to Himself disciples who do not seem to possess the necessary qualifications for fellowship with Him. Thus, by calling Levi, the tax-collector, who stood outside the worshipping community of Judaism (Mk. 2:14), Jesus broke through the then existing barriers separating the clean and the unclean, the righteous and the sinner. By their profession the tax-collectors were regarded as sinners and were thus avoided by the pious Jews (Lk. 15:1-2).

e. The response of the disciples called by Jesus is described as *following*: "And immediately they left their nets and followed him" (Mk. 1:17, 20; 2:14; cf. Lk. 5:11, "they left *everything* and followed him"). The one who responds to Jesus should leave everything behind and fix his eyes on Jesus alone. Faith in Jesus (Mk. 16:16; Lk. 17:5; 22:32; Jn. 6:69) is the decisive factor in understanding *mathetes* in the Gospels. If in Judaism "respect for the knowledge and ability of the teacher determines

3. "The linguistic finding, and investigation of the various passages show that *akolouthein* rather than *manthanein* is the true mark of the *mathetes*" (Rengstorf, "Manthano", in *TDNT*, Vol. IV, p. 406).

the relation of the *talmid* to him, faith is the controlling factor in the relation of the disciples of Jesus to their Master".⁴

f. Jesus called His disciples to follow him. Since the way of Jesus leads inevitably to the cross, readiness for suffering becomes a part of discipleship (cf. Mk. 8:34 par.). Jesus has clearly taught his disciples that they could expect no better fortune than their Master (Mt. 10: 24-25).

g. Another important characteristic of the N. T. discipleship is that the call to be a disciple is always a call to service. According to Mk. 1:17 the disciples are called "to become fishers of men" (cf. also Lk. 5:10). The meaning of this phrase is that "in view of the impending reign of God, the disciples are to catch men for the coming kingdom by preaching the Gospel and working in the name of Jesus".⁵

Bearing these general ideas in mind let us now analyse the meaning of discipleship in the Gospel of Mark.

II. The meaning of discipleship as revealed in the first part of the Gospel (Mk. 1:14-8:30)

The First Part of the Gospel tries to answer the fundamental question, "who is Jesus?" It also tries to answer the sub-question, "Who is a disciple of Jesus?" and this Mark does by means of three narratives about the disciples. The first part of the Gospel consists of three units climaxing in Jesus' cure of a blind man at Bethsaida and Peter's profession of faith. The three units are (1) Jesus and the Pharisees (1:14-3:6); (2) Jesus and the world (3:7-6:6a) and (3) Jesus and his disciples (6:6b-8:21); conclusion and transition (8:22-30). The units have a uniform structure: each unit begins with a summary of Jesus' activity (1:14-15; 3:7-12; 6:6b), continues with a narrative about the disciples (1:16-20; 3:13-19; 6:7-13, 30) and concludes by showing how Jesus' true identity was misunderstood by the

4. Rengstoff, op. cit., p. 447

5. D. Mueller, "Disciple", in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. I, Devon, U. K., 1975, p. 459.

Pharisees (3:6), by his own relatives and townspeople (6:1-6) and even by his own disciples (8:14-21). The narrative about the disciples in each unit has a progressive character: Jesus first called the disciples (1:16-20), later he constituted them as the Twelve (3:13-19) and finally he sent them out on mission (6:7-13, 30).

A. The call of the first disciples (1:16-20)

There are really two stories here: the call of Andrew and Simon (1:16-18) and the call of James and John (1:19-20). In these two stories it is Jesus who takes the initiative. First he "passes along" by the Sea of Galilee (1:16) or "goes on a little farther" (1:19). Then comes the elective act of Jesus: he "sees" Simon and Andrew (1:16), James and John (1:19). This is a divine seeing that penetrates and transforms the very being of man (cf. I Sam. 16:7; Lk. 22:61-62). "Discipleship always begins with Jesus" looking at a person (Mk. 1:16, 19; 2:14; 10:21; Lk. 19:5; in the O. T., cf. I. Sam 16:1; Ezra. 5:5; Zech. 12:4) and "calling him".⁶ The next step is Jesus' entrance into their personal lives: He "calls" them (1:20; cf. 1:17). Again this call is a divine call. He called men with divine authority as Yahweh himself called the prophets in the Old Testament (Comp. Jer. 1:4-19; Amos. 7:14-15; with Mk. 1:16-20). The divine call is always the miracle of God's unexpected grace. The four fishermen were in no way prepared for this divine call. It was while they were doing their everyday work of fishing (1:16) or mending the nets (1:19) that the call came to them. Jesus' word hits them like the call of the creator who "calls and there it is" (Ps 33:9). "Men are made disciples by the call of Jesus, which is as powerful as the creative word of God".⁷ The content of the call is the command, "Follow me, *deute opiso mou'* (1:17; *akoloutheimoi* in 2:14). *Akolouthein* is always the call to decisive and intimate discipleship of the earthly Jesus and points to the beginning of discipleship. The phrase *deute opiso mou* in 1:17 takes the meaning of *akolouthein*, "follow", "go behind" someone (cf. Mk. 2:14). "Going behind" means having a share

6. Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark*, Eng. trans. London, 1971, p. 48.

7. Ibid.

in the fellowship of Christ's life and suffering (Mt. 10:38; 16:24)..... The meaning of discipleship is that Jesus goes on ahead and prescribes the way.⁸ The aim of the disciple's calling is expressed in symbolic words: "I will make you become fishers of men" (1:17). It is above all a call to service. They were called to assist Jesus "in catching men, i. e., drawing them out of the waters of this world into the net of the eschatological life of the age to come".⁹

The response of the fishermen was immediate, "And immediately they left their nets and followed (*ekolouthesan*) him" (1:18; cf. 1:20; 2:14). Their response was an act of obedience involving a total break with their occupation and families. According to Luke 5:11, "they left *everything* and followed him". This is more significant because it implies the total renunciation of one's past and way of life. If the call is an act of grace, the response too is a gift of grace. Eduard Schweizer writes: "The response is already given to them in the call of Jesus. Indeed, according to Mk. 1:17, it is Jesus who will give future obedience to those he has called and transform them for the purpose of their calling".¹⁰ Following Jesus is the essence of discipleship. But it is to be remembered that *akolouthein* is not a univocal characterization of discipleship for Mark ...Following does not automatically signify the will to abide with Jesus and to learn from him factors that ordinarily denote discipleship in Mark".¹¹ Discipleship means to be totally bound to

8. W. Bauder, "opiso" in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. I., p. 493.

9. D. E. Nineham, *Saint Mark* (The Pelican New Testament Commentaries, 1963, p. 71.

10. Eduard Schweizer, *Jesus* Eng. trans. London, 1971, pp. 40-41.

11. Robert P. Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve*, Michigan, 1968, pp. 121-122. The verb *akolouthein* is used by Mark both in a literal sense and in a metaphorical sense. When it is used in a literal sense it means "to go after a person in time and place" without any religious significance (e. g. Mk. 3:7; 5:24; 6:1; 11:9; 14:13; 14:54; 15:41; *synakolouthein* in 5:37; 14:51). But in many passages *akolouthein* is used in metaphorical or religious sense and means "to go after a person as his disciple". In this sense it is synonymous with discipleship (e. g. Mk. 1:18, 20; 2:14, 15; 8:34; 9:38; 10:21, 28).

Jesus' person and mission and "following" is the first and basic requirement of discipleship. However, all those who followed Jesus were not his disciples; for example, the great crowd that "followed" Jesus (Mk. 5:24; cf. also Mk. 3:7; 11:9), the woman who followed him even to the cross (Mk. 15:40-41); these are never called "disciples" in the Gospel. "Discipleship means decision, Jesus' decision as regards certain individuals, but then it means no less their own decision to follow him. It consists, in actual fact, in the determination to abandon everything and, in the first instance quite literally to follow Jesus from place to place, and to accept the fate of the wanderer with all its privations."¹²

B. The appointment of the Twelve (Mk. 3:13-19)

The purpose of the disciples' calling, which is already hinted at 1:17 in a symbolic way, namely, "to become fishers of men", is given concrete expression in 3:14-15: first "to be with Jesus" and secondly "to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons". In other words, the aim of the appointment of the Twelve is to have fellowship with Jesus and to participate in His salvific mission.

"And he went up into the hills" (3:13a): Jesus' ascent to the hills alludes to the position of Yahweh on Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:3; cf. Mt. 5:1) and hence the absolute sovereignty of Jesus is hinted at. "And he called to him those whom he desired" points to the initiative and freedom of Jesus as well as the gift character of the call. The response of the disciples is described in these words: "and they came to him". It is very probable that the twelve disciples were called in the presence of the people (cf. Mk. 3:7-12), that they leave the people and adhere themselves to Christ.

In 3:14a it is stated: "And he appointed twelve".¹³ The number 'Twelve' has a clear redemptive historical significance.

12. Günther Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*, Eng. trans., London, 1960, p. 146.

13. It is true that these are differences between "the Twelve" (*hoi dodeka*), "the Apostles" (*hoi apostoloi*) and "the disciples" (*hoi mathetai*). But the differences cannot always be

It recalls the twelve founding fathers of the twelve tribes that made up the original Israel. By choosing twelve Jesus seems to indicate his desire to establish the new Israel, the new people of God. These twelve form the nucleus of the Messianic community.

The first aim for which the twelve are appointed is that they are "to be with Jesus" (3:14). "Being with Jesus" is the primary characterization of discipleship. They are to be with Jesus in order to learn, listen and understand who Jesus is and what his message is. "Being with Jesus basically means (1) that one *sees* the works of Jesus and (2) *hears* the word of Jesus; both of these mark the way of the disciples"¹⁴. "To be with him" always expresses a physical and actual presence and not merely an interior attachment of fidelity towards Jesus. According to Mark, Jesus desires the continuous physical presence of his disciples. One who reads the Gospel of Mark can always suppose that the disciples are always with Jesus¹⁵. Mark cannot say anything about Jesus unless His disciples are seen with Him; this explains somehow why Mark has the call of the disciples (1:16-20) as the first public act of Jesus¹⁶.

indicated with precision. "The Twelve" is a collective name referring to a definite group, whereas "the disciples" can be applied to individuals or to an indefinite number of followers. The term 'apostoloi' does not itself mean the group of the Twelve and we know that others besides the Twelve did temporary missionary work during the lifetime of Jesus, e. g. the mission of the seventy (Lk. 10:1). Hence, it can be shown that all the *mathetai* are not *apostoloi*. So also "hoi dodeka" and "apostoloi" are not at all identical. "Hoi dodeka (mathetai, apostoloi) denotes the narrower circle either of *mathetai* or *apostoloi*" (Rengstoff, op. cit., p. 450; cfr. also 'Sean Freyne, *The Twelve: Disciples and Apostles*, London, 1968, pp. 12-61).

14. R. P. Meye, op. cit., p. 103.

15. J. Delonme: *Lecture de l'Evangile selon saint Mark*, Paris, p. 35.

16. Ibid. It is interesting to note that, when Jesus sends his disciples on a mission (6:7-13), Mark narrates nothing on Jesus and only after their return from mission does he resume his narrative on Jesus (cf. 6:13 and 6:30). Mark fills in this interval with an account of Herod's and the people's opinion about Jesus

The second aim of the appointment of the Twelve is that they are “to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons” (3:14-15). The preaching and the expulsion of demons characterize the initial and programmatic action of Jesus (Mk. 1:21-28; 1:39). The disciples have been chosen to continue the same mission of Jesus in perfect dependence on him. Here we have to understand that it is their communion with Jesus that enable them to continue the mission of Jesus.

Discipleship in Mark requires not only a commitment to the person of Jesus, but also a commitment to his mission. The twofold mission described in 3:14-15 is brought to realization in 6:7-13, 30 when the Twelve engaged themselves in active participation in preaching and exorcism.

C. The mission of the Twelve (6:7-13, 30)

The Twelve were appointed in chapter 3 “to be with” Jesus (3:14b) and also “to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons” (3:14c-15). They have now spent their period of preparation with Jesus, hearing his words (4:35-6:6), and the time has come for them to take an active part in the ministry of Jesus, both by words and works¹⁷. Mark understands their mission only as a “prelude to the definitive mission after the death and resurrection of Christ”¹⁸. Mark has not much to say about the itineraries nor about the success of this mission. He does not even relate the content of their preaching apart from the phrase, “that men should repent”. Whereas Matthew (10:7) and Luke (9:2) present the Twelve proclaiming “the kingdom of God” when they are being sent out, Mark is careful to avoid such a statement. In his view, the disciples have not yet

followed by a detailed account of John Baptist’s Death 6:16-29). The only place where Jesus is left alone is at Gethsemani: “And they all forsook him, and fled” (Mk. 14:50). For his Passion Jesus is alone. After the resurrection the disciples are told to be united once again with the Lord (Mk. 16:6-7; cf. 14:28).

17. D. E. Nineham, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

18. Beda Rigaux, ‘*The Testimony of St. Mark*’ Eng. trans. Chicago, 1966, p. 119. According to Vincent Tylor, “the incident is merely an extension of the teaching ministry of Jesus” (*The Gospel According to St. Mark.*, Second Edn., 1966, p. 302).

understood the mystery of the kingdom. It is curious to note that Mark never speaks of the disciples preaching the Kingdom of God. Lightfoot may have been right in thinking that "the Twelve, like John the Baptist, are only able to preach a mission of repentance in connection with the coming person or event; not until the period after the passion, when the death of Jesus has taken place and their eyes have been opened and their understanding finally enlightened, will that same preaching become a message of salvation"¹⁹. It is also possible to think that "Jesus intended this preliminary mission of the Twelve to be part of their training for their future mission, a period of practical experience which would be a valuable basis for the more concentrated teaching that he was soon to give them"²⁰.

The mission charge given in Mk. 6:8-11 means two things: first the disciples should not rely upon their own resources, whether material or spiritual, but on the One who sends them and whom they proclaim. Secondly, "one must not be so fanatical as to think that he is permitted to use only his faith in the miraculous against wild animals and snakes, and not to use a stick or a shoe"²¹. The negative commands given in the first part of the mission charge (6:8-9) also imply that the mission was one of extreme urgency. If the disciples are rejected by any place, they are asked to shake off the dust that sticks to their feet (6:11). The action is symbolic; it means that the place is to be regarded as heathen.²² It was a custom among the Jews to shake off the dust that stuck to their feet when they returned to the Holy Land from a Gentile region and the symbolic meaning of this gesture was to leave everything unclean behind them. In our case "the shaking off the dust is not an acted curse, but a testimony intended to provoke thought and to lead men to repentance."²³

19. R. H. Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation in the Gospels*, p. 106, n. 2, quoted in D. E. Nineham, *Saint Mark*, pp. 170-171.

20. C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, Cambridge, 1959, p. 203.

21. Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark*, p. 130.

22. Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to Mark*, second edition, London, 1966, p. 305.

23. *Ibid.*

III. The true meaning of discipleship as revealed in the second part of the Gospel (8:31-16:8)

In the first part of the Gospel Mark depicts the disciples as called by Jesus (1:16-20; 2:14) to be with Him and share in his ministry (3:14-15). They are also presented as the recipients of special instruction (4:11, 34; 7:17-23; 8:31-9:1; 9:30-50; 10:23-45; 11:20-25; 13:1-37) and of divine revelation (9:2-8) and are even commissioned to a ministry in Galilee like that of Jesus Himself (6:7, 12, 13, 30). They witness Jesus' miracles and listen to his words. In spite of all this the disciples remain incapable of understanding who Jesus is or what he is about (cf. Mk. 4:13, 40-41; 6:49-52; 7:18; 8:14-21; 9:32). Mark emphasizes this lack of understanding on the part of the disciples in a stronger way than the other Evangelists. For example, according to Matthew's account, Jesus' walking on the sea made the disciples "worship" Jesus and confess that he is truly "the Son of God" (Mt. 14:33), but in Mark the same event could produce only terror (Mk. 6:50, "they all saw him and were terrified") and hardness of heart (6:52, "they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened"). Even Peter's proclamation, "You are the Christ" (Mk. 8:29) is clouded with misunderstanding. Peter and the other apostles shared the popular Jewish expectation of a royal Messiah who would restore Israel's former glory by delivering them from the Roman domination (cf. Mk. 10:35-45; Acts. 1:6).

As Paul J. Achtemeier says, "the failure of the disciples to understand Jesus is grounded in Mark's Christology, not in the disciples psychological makeup".²⁴ According to Mark any understanding of Jesus that does not take into account his suffering and his death on the cross is a false understanding of the person of Jesus. "From beginning to end, the Jesus of Mark's narratives is the Jesus who will suffer, and unless that is understood, Jesus can only be misunderstood".²⁵ Peter's

24. Paul J. Achtemeier, *Mark*, Proclamation Commentaries, Philadelphia, 1975, p. 100.

25. Ibid., There is in the Gospel of Mark a strong concentration on the cross of Jesus. Even from the beginning of his Gospel one could find allusions to the suffering and death of Jesus (cf. 1:14; 2:20; 3:6, 19; 6:1-6).

Messianic confession (8:29) comes as the conclusion and climax of the first Part of the Gospel. Once Peter, as the spokesman of the Twelve recognised Him as the Christ Jesus makes every effort to teach the disciples what it means to be the Christ, what it means to follow this Christ. This is what Mark does in the second part of the Gospel, especially in the central section (8:31-10:45).

A. The meaning of Jesus' Messiahship

The very opening verse of the Second Part reveals the path of the Son of Man who has to travel along the way of the cross to glory: "And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (8:31). For the first time in his public ministry Jesus reveals in clear terms the meaning of His Messiahship. He is the Messiah who has chosen to suffer, and His Messiahship may not be conceived apart from the reality of the cross. It is this portrait of the Messiah that irritated Peter. In the eyes of the Jews a suffering Messiah was a contradiction in terms; a crucified Messiah was a scandal (cf. I Cor. 1:23; Gal. 3:13). This is why Peter protested vehemently against the idea of suffering (Mk 8:32). Peter wanted a Messiah without suffering. But that was against God's plan of salvation. That "the Son of Man must (*dei*) suffer" is a divine necessity, already decreed by God, and therefore no turning back. Hence Jesus rebuked Peter saying, "Get behind me Satan! For you are not on the side of God, but of men" (8:33). The words *hypage opiso mou, Satana* recalls Mt. 4:10, *hypage Satana*. "Jesus regards Peter's attitude as a temptation, an attempt to draw him away from the path of obedience to his Father's will".²⁶ The additional phrase, "and seeing his disciples" (Mk 8:33a) is peculiar to Mark's account; the reproof which follows is for their benefit as well as Peter's.²⁷

26. C. E. B. Cranfield, op. cit., p. 280.

27. Vincent Taylor, op. cit., p. 379.

B. The call to discipleship of the cross

The main thrust of the Second Part of the Gospel of Mark is that neither the disciples nor the readers should come to an easy acceptance of Jesus as the Christ, without any appreciation of the way of the Messiah. Following Jesus is the true Mark of discipleship. But it is imperative for the disciples to know what it means to follow Jesus. "To follow Jesus means following him into suffering."²⁸ It is only in following on the way to the cross that it is possible to understand who Jesus is. As Mark sees it there is no possibility of discipleship apart from suffering. "Discipleship is never a free ride, never cheap grace."²⁹ "And he called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me'" (8:34). This verse is not a call to discipleship but a statement regarding the condition for following Jesus.³⁰ It is worth noting that Jesus has addressed these words not only to the twelve, but to the multitude as well. These words are directed to any who would follow Jesus, and not just to the inner circle of twelve disciples. This means that Jesus' way is open to all men who confess that Jesus is the Messiah. "It was the Lord's intention that those who follow him should not be detached observers of his passion, but men who grow in faith and understanding through participation in his sufferings."³¹

Mk 8:34 lays down three conditions which must be fulfilled by a faithfull follower of Jesus. The first is self-denial, "let him deny himself". To deny oneself is to disown one's self, to turn away from the idolatry of self-centredness.³² The second condition is to take up the cross. The term "cross" is introduced here for the first time in the Gospel and is not mentioned until the passion narrative proper (15:21, 30, 32). It

28. Paul J. Achtemeier, op. cit., p. 98.

29. William J. Carl III, "Mark 10:17-27", in *Interpretation*, vol. 33, No. 3, (July, 1979), p. 283.

30. Robert P. Meye, op. cit., p. 125.

31. William L. Lane, *Commentary on the Gospel of Mark*, Michigan, 1974, p. 306.

32. C. E. B. Cranfield, p. 281.

is significant that it is introduced at this point in the narrative. The expression "to take up his cross" evokes the picture of a condemned man who was forced to carry on his back the cross-beam to the place of execution. "The meaning here is that the disciple must be ready to face martyrdom."³³ It is not to be explained in a mystical sense as in Gal. 2:20. The third requirement is continued loyalty in discipleship: "and follow me"—*kai akoloutheito moi*. Mark has used aorist imperative in the first two conditions in order to lay stress on the definite decisions that have to be taken with respect to Christ. But in the third requirement Mark has used present imperative and this change seems to be intentional and the idea would be that of the continuous relationship with Christ.

C. The way of the Son of Man is the way of the disciple

Mark has devoted the central section of the Gospel (8:31-10:45) to the presentation of discipleship along with the presentation of the way of the Son of Man.³⁴ This section begins immediately by showing the way the Son of Man must go (8:31). Jesus is seen "on the way"—*en te hodo* with the disciples (8:27; 9:33, 34; 10:17). Mk 10:32 defines the direction of this way—Jesus' movement is to "Jerusalem". For the first time Jerusalem is mentioned as the goal of Jesus' journey. That "Jesus was walking ahead of them" (10:32) expresses Christ's "conscious acceptance of His Messianic destiny".³⁵ The fear and amazement of the disciples "seem to imply that they foresaw what was involved in the journey" (D. E. Nineham).

33. Ibid., p. 282.

34. In Mk 8:31 Jesus substitutes "The Son of Man" for the title 'Messiah' which Peter has just proclaimed (8:29). "The Son of Man" is Jesus' characteristic self-designation, the title he himself prefers to other titles. The fact that this title could hold together both the glorious aspect (cf. 8:38; 13:26; 14:62) and the suffering aspect (cf. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34) made it suitable for Jesus' purpose.

35. Vincent Taylor, op. cit., p. 437. "The vivid picture of Jesus walking before his frightened disciples would no doubt have a special poignancy for Roman readers threatened by persecution" (C. E. B. Cranfield, op. cit. p. 335).

Jesus' determination to go to Jerusalem should alert us to the fact that those who follow the suffering Messiah have to face the same fate of the Leader.

Three predictions of the passion dominate this central section (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). After each passion prediction the disciples misunderstand the meaning of that prediction (8:32-33; 9:32-34; 10:35-41). Jesus then instructs the disciples about the true meaning of discipleship (8:34-38; 9:35-37; 10:42-45). In the three instructions on discipleship we can notice a development in the radical demand that Jesus makes of his disciples. The first instruction (8:34-38) makes it clear that "concern for personal safety cannot be paramount for any of his followers. If the prospect of suffering and death would cause one to pull back from his devotion to Jesus (to be "ashamed" of him. 8:38), that person cannot become a disciple. Jesus must be of first and exclusive significance, or discipleship is out of the question" (4:34)³⁶. In the second instruction (9:35-37) Jesus declares that true greatness consists in humble service to all. In the third instruction (10:42-45) Jesus tells his disciples that "worldly ideas of rank and privilege are out of order in the new Israel because they are inconsistent with the mission of the Son of Man"³⁷. On the other hand the disciples have to devote themselves to the humble service of all. In short, discipleship means following Jesus on the way of suffering and service.

D. The two healings of blindness and their symbolic meaning in relation to discipleship

Just before this central section and immediately after it Mark narrates two miracle stories of the cure of blind men: the blind man of Bethsaida (Mk. 8:22-26) and the blind Bartimaeus (Mk 10:46-52). We have to remember that in Mark's Gospel these are the only cases where blind people are healed by Jesus. Many authors find symbolic meaning in these stories.

In the case of the blind man from Bethsaida (8:22-26) the cure takes place in two stages and this is the only cure in the

36. Paul J. Achtemeier, op. cit., p. 98.

37. C. E. B. Cranfield, op. cit., p. 341.

four Gospels that takes place gradually; in all other cases Jesus' word effects an immediate healing. The healing of the blind man has a symbolic significance for Mark. The disciple's understanding of Jesus' person and ministry was as yet at the first stage of the blind man who 'saw men like trees walking' (8:24). Like the blind man the disciples have seen, but not fully. In the miracle story a second touch was needed to restore his sight completely. In the same way the disciples after the second touch of Jesus' Spirit at Pentecost, will see all things clearly - will understand fully Jesus' person and mission (cf. Jn. 16:12-15; Acts. 1:8).

In the central section (8:31-10:45) Jesus is trying to bring the disciples to an understanding regarding the way of the Son of Man as the way of the Cross. But the disciples still remain blind to the meaning and identity of Jesus. As long as they fail to accept the implications of the mystery of the Cross they are spiritually blind. "Bartimaeus serves as a Prototype of the true disciple and provides a model for the Christian who needs to know what it means to see."³⁸ After he received the gift of sight Bartimaeus followed Jesus "on the way" (10:52). The way which Bartimaeus takes leads straight to the cross. By this story Mark shows that one who has sight can actually go on the way that Jesus is going. Besides, this story gives the disciples "hope that Jesus who removes physical blindness can enable them to have the vision to see the path they must follow if they are to be true disciples".³⁹ If the disciples will follow the way of the Son of Man, they will finally stand before the cross and understand who Jesus really is (15:39).

In spite of Jesus' continued instructions, the disciples remain incapable of understanding Jesus' person and mission. The ignorance of the disciples reaches its climax in the Passion narrative where one betrays him (14:43-46), another denies him (14:66-72) and finally all desert him (14:50). "Even so, Mark implies that the ignorance of the disciples is only temporary. When the dis-

38. Earl S. Johnson, Jr., "Mark 10:46-52: Blind Bartimaeus", in *C. B. Q.*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (April, 1978), p. 201.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 203.

ciples shall see the resurrected Jesus, who remains the crucified one (16:6), in Galilee he will reconcile them to himself" (16:6-7; cf. 14:28)⁴⁰.

Conclusion

The call to discipleship is essentially a call to follow Christ. It is both a gift and a task. It is a gift inasmuch as it is a call from God. Jesus did not wait for voluntary followers. He called those whom he desired. Discipleship is a task because it is a call to service – a service even to the point of sacrificing one's own life for the sake of Jesus.

According to Mark, what is most important about Jesus is his cross. It was not in miraculous deeds that Jesus revealed his full identity but on the cross. Therefore it is by following the way of Jesus to the cross that the disciples have to reveal their true identity. It is only through the discipleship of the cross that communion with Jesus' person and mission is possible. Unless one understands the dimension of suffering that essentially belongs to Jesus' mission, one can only misunderstand Jesus. It is the acceptance of suffering that reveals to us the true identity of Jesus. It is only by following the suffering Messiah to the event of the cross that one can understand the true meaning of discipleship.

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40. Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Gospel in Four Editions" in *Interpretation*, Vol. 33, No. 4. (October, 1979), p. 366.

Discipleship in the Lucan Journey Narrative

The theme of discipleship is an important one in the so called Lucan Journey Narrative (Lk 9:51-19:46), which is the central section in the third gospel. It is an accepted fact that making use of the journey motif in Mark (10:1; 10:32), Luke constructed a journey scheme in 9:51-19:46. Such a scheme is evident from the various journey notices and situations in the section.¹

Luke's concept of the history of salvation is also responsible for the journey scheme in the central section of his gospel. The evangelist portrays the history of salvation as a way. Concerning John the Baptist we read in the Acts that he was finishing his course (*dromon*) (Ac. 13:25). On the same occasion the commencement of Jesus' ministry is depicted as an entrance (*eisodos*) (Ac 13:24) and in Transfiguration the end of his life is presented as a departure (*exodos*) (Lk 9:31). The central part of journey section describes the public ministry of Jesus as a way: "It is necessary for me *to be on my way* today and tomorrow and the day following, for it is impossible that a prophet should die outside Jerusalem" (Lk 13:33). In Lk 20:21 Jesus teaches the way of God and in Ac 2:25-28 he is the one who scows the paths of life. Luke probably is influenced by Mark in the development of his theology of the way "I send my messenger before you to prepare your way... make ready the way of the Lord, clear him a straight path" (Mk 1:2f.). We may also remember that the concept of a wandering preacher (philosopher) as a result of divine command was a frequent one in antiquity.²

1) Lk. 9:51.53.56.57; 10:1.38; 13:22.31.33.35; 14:25; 17:11; 18:31; 18.35.36.37; 19:1.11.28.36.37.41.45.

2) Cf. C. H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and the Genre of Luke-Acts*, Missoula, 1974, p. 90.

1. Meaning of Luke's journey narrative

There have been many attempts to explain the journey section of Luke which is beyond our scope.³ For the evangelist Jesus' journey towards Jerusalem is first and foremost a journey towards his ascension and glorification through passion and death. In the very first verse we read: "When the days drew near for him to be received up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Lk 9:51). There are also other passages which are clear on this point (Lk 12:49f; 13:32f; 17:27; 18:31-34). Jesus who goes up to Jerusalem for his ascension (*analēmpsis*) is also our leader of salvation (Lk 9:55; 14:25; 19:28; 24:50; Ac 3:15; 5:31). This is especially manifest from several healings and works of salvation narrated in this section (Lk 11:14; 13:10-17; 14:1-6; 17:11-19; 18:35-43). In fact at the central part of the narrative (13:32) the taumaturgic activity of Jesus is presented parallel to his journey to Jerusalem. The various healings are found in connection with important journey notices and this is in order to show that Jesus who goes up to Jerusalem performs miracles of healing and saves men. The important role exorcisms and healings play in the ministry of Jesus may be seen from Acts 10:38. Healings indeed are the signs of the arrival of the kingdom of God in the person of Jesus (Lk 9:11; 11:20; 17:25). In the missionary activity of the disciples also they are advised to preach the Kingdom of God by means of healings (Lk 9:2; 10:9). It is worthy of observation that towards the end of the journey section we find a logion concerning the salvific mission of the Son of Man (19:10).⁴ In the same manner the journey narrative concludes with the mention of peace (*eirēnē*) and salvation

3) A. Denaux, *Het lucaanse Reisverhaal* (Lk 9.51-19,44) CollBG, 14 (1968) 214-42 & 15 (1969) 464-501. Only few scholars mention the soteriological aspect of this section of Luke. This, in our opinion, is an important concept of the travel section.

4) At the beginning of the travel narrative we find a variant reading: "You do not know what spirit you are made of. The Son of Man came not to destroy souls but to save them" 9:56. This reading probably is original. About this problem, cf. J. M. Ross, *The rejected words in Luke 9:54-56*. Exp Tim, 84 (1972) 85-88.

brought by Jesus (19:41-44). Furthermore, Jesus' mission to Jerusalem is described as a divine visitation (19:41-44), which people either accept or reject.

The various teachings given especially through parables should be understood in the light of the above christological and soteriological concepts. During Jesus' salvific journey to Jerusalem he gives instructions to his disciples on what they have to do in order to be saved.⁵ Jesus goes up to Jerusalem to suffer and to be glorified and his sufferings are presented as a model for the disciples. Following Jesus' own path of suffering to glory the disciples and the Church journey towards the eschatological Kingdom of Heaven through many tribulations (Ac 14:22). This principle clearly stated in the second volume of Luke is his basic concept about discipleship.

2. Who are the disciples?

In order to get a proper understanding of Luke's use of the term *disciples* (*mathētēs*) we should have a look into the Acts of the Apostles. Here this term is never applied to the Twelve or Eleven but it always designates the believers or Christians. The Twelve have a distinct role to play in their authority as the leaders of the Church. In the Acts the term *disciples* (*mathētai*) is used frequently in connection with such terms as 'brothers' (Ac 9:26-29.30; 11:29) or those belonging to the 'way' (Ac 9:1f.). It can be applied to all members of the Christian community (20:30) which is formed out of Jews (19:9) or Gentiles (15:20).⁶ It may be also noted that the term *matheteuein* (to make a disciple) is employed in close connection with *euangelizein* (to preach the good news) in Acts 14:21. In the Gospel of Luke the Twelve may be called *disciples* but the term *disciple* is frequently applied to a much larger group (Lk 6.13.17; 14:25-35; 19.37). Though radical commitment is demand-

5) J. Schneider, *zur Analyse des lukanischen Reiseberichts*, Synoptische Studien, Fs. f. A. Wickenhauser, Muenchen, 1953, p. 227, calls the Lucan travel narrative as the first "popular mission" preached by Jesus.

6) See also Acts 4:32; 6:2.5; 15:12; 21:22.

ded by Jesus from his intimate followers, every Christian, man or woman, can be a disciple according to Luke.⁷

In the third Gospel we find equal importance given to men and women as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the good news. In Luke's view men and women have to share the same responsibilities; they are privileged to receive the same gifts and are equal in honour and grace. Hence he does not hesitate to include many women among the followers of Jesus (Lk 8:1-3). The two-membered architectonic art of Luke is quite well known and the complementary parallelism between man and woman plays a great role in it.⁸ The following parallels between man and woman in Luke-Acts may be noted in particular.

Lk 1:1-20 & 1:26-38	: Zachary and Mary
Lk 1:46-55 & 1:67-79	: Magnificat of Mary and Benedictus of Zachary
Lk 2:25-38	: Simeon and Anna
Lk 4:25-28	: Widow of Sarepta and Naaman
Lk 4:31-39	: The healing of the demoniac and Peter's mother-in-law
Lk 7:1-17	: The centurion of Capharnaum and the widow of Naim
Lk 10:29-42	: The good Samaritan and Martha and Mary
Lk 13:10-17 & 14:1-6	: The stooped woman and the man with dropsy
Lk 15:4-10	: The man with hundred sheep and the woman with ten pieces of silver

7) The distinction between the Twelve and the disciples in general is evident in Lk-Acts. Luke probably envisages also a third category of disciples, namely, the very intimate followers of Jesus who keep the evangelical counsels strictly (cf. Lk 14: 25ff; 18:28-30). On the concept of discipleship in Lk., see, S. Freyne, *The Twelve: Disciples and Apostles*: London 1968, pp. 207-255; M. Sheridan, *Disciples and Discipleship in Mt. and Lk.*, BThB, III, (1973) 252-255.

8) R. Morgenthaler, *Die lukanische Geschichtsschreibung als Zeugnis*, I, Zürich, 1949, pp. 104f; H. Flender, *St. Luke Theologian of Redemptive history*, London, 1967 pp. 9f.

Lk 18:1-14	: The importunate woman and the publican
Lk 23,55-24,35	: The women at the tomb and the Emmaus disciples
Ac 4:1-11	: Ananias and Saphira
Ac 9:32-42	: Aeneas and Tabitha
Ac 16:13-34	: Lydia and the Philippian Jailer
Ac 17:34	: Dionysius and Damaris

Through these parallels Luke shows also that man and woman stand as dual witnesses to the truth of Christ and the Kingdom. The motif of dual witness, which is employed to prove the truth of a case, is common to the Old Testament and the Synoptics⁹. Furthermore, this parallel is used in order to insist on the universality of the Gospel message and to indicate that Jesus is the Saviour of all.

3. Basic requirements of discipleship in the journey narrative

Important teachings on Christian discipleship in the journey section of Luke are presented especially at its beginning, centre and end. Ancient writers used to insist on the ideas dear to them in the key parts of their literary work and Luke was not an exception to this rule. Especially in the form of three questions and answers in the beginning, centre and end of the narrative the evangelist teaches his readers what a follower of Jesus is expected to do. See Lk. 10:25f; 13:22f; and 18:18ff. As a very detailed examination of this point is beyond the scope of this article, we shall examine only some of the essential conditions of discipleship in Lk. 9:51-19:46.

a) *The narrow way or the path of the cross*

Already at the beginning of the section (Lk. 9:57-62, hardships of apostolic calling), it is made explicit that suffering and renunciation are absolutely necessary for following the Lord who goes up to Jerusalem. Before the incidents in 9:57-62 we read that Jesus who journeys to Jerusalem meets with rejection from the Samaritans (9:53). This is in order to present Jesus as the model of sufferings for the disciples, who are to follow him.

9) Dt 19:15; Mt 18:16; Lk 10:1ff; 23:1-16; 24:13-35; 2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19; Heb 10:28; 1 Jn 5:7f.

The small story of vocation in 9:57-58 illustrates that the disciple has to follow the Son of Man who has nowhere to lay his head. Likewise, Lk 9:59-60 points out that the duty of preaching the Kingdom should stand above the family ties, and the teaching in 9:61-62 is to show that the discipleship should be a constant following of the Lord without looking to the right or left¹⁰. The incident in 9:56-60 is a reminder that not only external service is demanded of the disciples but also a very intimate dedication to the Lord. Jesus takes hold of the innermost being of man. The disciples' service is not a service for the dead but a service for the Kingdom and eternal life. Lk. 9:59-60 points out also that Jesus is prophet greater than Elias, who allowed Elisha to say farewell to his relatives at home before his prophetic call (I Kings 19:20f.). The words during the call of the apostles in Lk. 5:10., "Do not be afraid; henceforth you shall be fishers of men... and they left everything and followed him", and Lk 9:59-60 are intimately connected. For in both passages we read about the following of Jesus as well as about the missionary activity and renunciation, which are consequences of this following. In connection with the mission of the seventy (seventy two) it is insisted that the preacher should practise absolute detachment without purse, haversack and sandals (10:4)¹¹.

At the central part of the journey narrative in strict relation to Jesus' journey to Jerusalem there is a question concerning those who are saved (Lk. 13:22). In answer to this question it is said that in order to be saved one has to enter by the narrow door (13:23-24). This entering by the narrow door

10) Jesus' steadfast decision to go up to Jerusalem in order to meet the sufferings awaiting him there is implied in the phrase 'he set his face' (*prosōpon estērisen*) found in Lk 9:51.

In Mt 8:12-22 the hardships of apostolic calling is narrated by two incidents. The third one in Lk 9:61-62 is missing in the first Gospel.

11) Already at the beginning of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem the journey of the Gospel to the whole world begins. The number 70 or 72 is symbolic of the universal character of the Gospel. The symbolism is based on Gn. 10 where we find the enumeration of the nations. Some manuscripts have the number 72 corresponding to the Septuagint version of Gn. 10.

would mean repentance and absolute renunciation. Again in the following chapter closely connected with a journey situation denial of all that one holds dear is demanded by Jesus (14:25-27. 31: 33). A disciple who is not ready for renunciation and self-denial would be thrown out like useless salt (14:34-35). It is good to remember that the call to a more closer following of the Lord by the practice of celibacy found in Mt 19:12 and Cor. 7:8. 32 is in substance the same as the teachings found in Lk 14:25-27. Already in the 'prologue' to the journey section (Lk 9:23), just after the prediction of the passion in 9:22, the evangelist insisted upon the necessity of taking up one's cross daily and following Jesus and this thought is repeated in 14:27.¹² The term 'daily' is a Lucan addition to the parallel Mk 8.34. It shows us that bearing one's cross after Jesus is a life-long task, not a passing affair.

In the so-called 'minor apocalypse' (Lk 17:20-37), which is presented after an important journey notice (17:11), it is shown that the disciple has to lose his life for the sake of Jesus (17:33). This is similar to the teaching found in Lk. 9:24 (prologue to the journey narrative). Towards the close of the journey section Peter, the head of the apostolic college, claims that they left everything they had in order to follow Jesus and he is anxious to know about the reward of renunciation. Jesus tells his followers that their recompense is "repayment many times over in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life" (18:28-30). It should be borne in mind that already here on earth renunciation makes one free for apostolic work and it frees Jesus' followers from the sad isolation of self. As a consequence of abnegation and dedication to Jesus and the word of God the disciples are integrated into God's family and Kingdom and they acquire a new life (Lk 11: 28; 8:21).

After describing the necessity of renunciation in the life of the disciples Luke writes an important and detailed prediction of the passion in 18.31-34 towards the close of the journey

12) Lk 9:18-50 may be considered as the 'prologue' to the journey section. Cf. H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, London, 1969, pp. 55-60.

narrative in connection with Jesus' solemn ascent to Jerusalem. This is in order to present Jesus, who renounced his own life for the sake of others, as a model for the disciples. In fact there is a parallel between the sufferings undergone by Jesus and the persecution of the Apostles and disciples presented in the Acts. An attentive reading of Lk. 9:44; 18:32 and 24:7, where the sufferings of Jesus are described, and Acts 12:4; 21:11; 27:1 and 28, 7, where the suffering and persecution of the disciples are narrated, will make clear this parallelism. Jesus goes up to Jerusalem to suffer and this is the purpose of Paul also to go up to Jerusalem (Ac. 20: 22). By such parallels Luke shows us that Jesus' fate is also the fate of the disciples. Suffering indeed confirms the reality of our option for the Lord and is a certain pledge of our future glory with him (Lk 21:19). During the earthly ministry of Jesus the disciples do not grasp the mystery of suffering in his life (Lk. 9:45; 18:35; 22:24-38). This mystery is understood by them only after the paschal events, when the Lord himself opens their eyes (24:32. 44-46) and with the power and help of the Holy Spirit (24:49; Ac 1:8). The healing of the blind man in (Lk 18:35-43, which is written in close proximity with Lk 18: 34, is a symbol of the disciples whose eyes are to be opened by the Lord (*kyrios*).¹³

b) *The impossibility of serving two masters*

A very important teaching on discipleship found in the travel section is the necessity of the denial of riches and possessions. It is pointed out frequently that every disciple should be aware of the fact that he cannot serve God and mamon at the same time. There was indeed a tension between the rich and the poor in the Lucan community and therefore we find important teachings concerning the good use of wealth in the third Gospel especially in its central section. The situation described in 1 Cor 11: 20ff. and James 2:5 was similar to the problems of the community of Luke. The rich Christians in the days of Luke grew up in the Greco-Roman culture which had no concern for the poor. They had great difficulty in adapting the teaching of

13) We may notice that the healing of the blind in Mk 10:46-52 and Mt 20:29-34 is not presented just after the prediction of the passion.

Jesus for the care of the poor.¹⁴ Luke is generally considered as the evangelist of the poor and is no wonder that he writes about their privileges. A reading of the third Gospel would compel the rich to examine their conscience.

Already in the 'magnificat' of Mary we read that "he has filled the hungry with good things and the rich he has sent empty away" (Lk 1:53). In the sermon on the plane the evangelist pictures a sharp contrast between the happiness of the poor and the woes of the rich (Lk. 6:20-23; 6:24-26). We may remember that these curses directed towards the rich are found only in Lk. Noteworthy is also the fact that in Lk. 21:1-4 (the widow's mite), there exists a contrast between the behaviour of the poor widow and that of the rich, in which Jesus praises the offering of the poor woman. In the parallel account of Mark (12:41f.) the contrast is not so sharp as in Lk. since Mark contrasts the deed of the widow with that of a multitude.

Coming back to the journey narrative, we notice towards its end that "it is hard for those who have riches to enter the Kingdom of God... it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God" (Lk. 18, 24f.). These words are written after the episode of the rich aristocrat (18:18-23) who was very unwilling to sell all that he owned and distribute to the poor and follow Jesus. By this arrangement Luke instructs us that, for a closer following of Jesus, denial of riches is a *sine qua non*. Through several parables, to which the evangelist added parenetic elements, the point under discussion is taught frequently.

In Chapter twelve, through the parable of the rich fool, it is shown that there is no security for a man who stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God (12:13-21). On the same occasion absolute trust in the divine providence as well as the necessity of almsgiving are shown. The disciples are to set their hearts on the Kingdom of God, then other things will be given to them (12:31). Similar teachings are given in Mt. in the sermon on the mount (Mt 6,

14) R. J. Karris, *Invitation to Luke*, New York, 1977
p. 16.

25:33; 6:20-21). The third evangelist presents them in order to illustrate the quality required for a disciple who has to follow the Lord to Jerusalem. Lk 12:33-34 instructs the disciples concerning the necessity of almsgiving, which is a very dear concept of Luke. "Sell your possessions and give alms. Get yourselves purses that do not wear out, treasure that will not fail you, in heaven where no thief can reach it and no moth destroy it" (12:33).

Towards the close of chapter fourteen after the two parables in 14:28-32 the logion concerning the denial of possessions (14:33) may be found. The two small parables (that of the tower builder and the king marching to war against another king) remind us that those who are to follow the Lord closely are to ponder well in advance whether they are ready to face the radicality of the discipleship of Jesus, which consists in absolute renunciation. Scholars are of opinion that in Luke's time there were many who abandoned their highly esteemed vocation and the situation of his community might be compared with the problems of our own days.¹⁵ In a particular manner the two parables instruct the future candidates for discipleship to sit down and work out the cost to see if they have enough strength to live up to the high ideals of their vocation.

Important teachings concerning the good use of wealth are given especially in Lk 16:1-17:4. This section may be divided into three:

- a) Teachings meant for the disciples (the parable of the crafty steward) (16:1-13)
- b) Discussion with the Pharisees (16:14-18) and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31).
- c) Words addressed to the disciples (17:1-4)

The clue to understanding the Lucan interpretation of the parable of the crafty steward (16:1-8) is verse 9, which is an advice to the faithful to make proper use of the tainted money

15) Cf. A. Stolger, *Armut und Ehelosigkeit - Besitz und Ehe nach dem Lukasevangelium*, GeLe, 40 (1967) 54.

in order to win friends for the Kingdom of God. This good use of wealth consists in almsgiving and sharing, which as we shall see soon, are concepts dear to Luke. The original thrust of the parable was the general eschatological warning to be clever and be prepared at the last hour. Money is called "unrighteous mamon" in 16:9, because it does not give us what it apparently promises and it deceives us. One cannot trust in it, build on it and have security in it. It cannot save its possessor from eternal damnation (Lk. 12:13-21 and Mk. 4:19).

The duty of the disciple is not only to be clever in the good use of money entrusted to him by God but also to be faithful in its administration (16:10-12). If one can be trusted in the good administration of money, which is not his own and has the least value in comparison with the eternal good, it may be a guarantee for the attainment of genuine riches in the Kingdom. Luke does not consider wealth and affluence as evil in themselves. He presents God and Christ as earthly Lords in his parables (Lk 15:11f; 16:1; 19:12f.). At the end of the journey narrative he speaks about the conversion of a wealthy man, Zacchaeus, who attained peace and salvation by distributing his riches to the poor (19:1-10). What is not possible is compromise between the service of God and mamon since whole hearted service to one excludes that to the other. Good deeds are the surest means to avoid the danger from money and to be on God's side. Luke instils in the hearts of the faithful the idea of detachment not by the concept of an imminent parousia as in Paul (1 Cor. 7:24-31) but by ethical and religious admonitions as well as thoughts concerning divine reward and punishment (Lk. 12:13-21; 16:9).

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31) illustrates further the teachings of the sermon on the plane concerning the happiness of the poor (Lk 6:20f.) and the judgement on the rich (6:24f.). After this famous parable Lk. 17:1-4 is written and here the problem concerning scandal in the community is the main theme. The occasion in which Lk 17:1-4 was written is probably the conflict between the rich and the poor in the Lucan community. Many poor disciples were shocked and

scandalized at the merciless and proud behaviour of the rich.¹⁶ The evangelist insists that only by forgiveness and correction the tension between the rich and the poor in a community may be overcome, and not by violence, envy and destruction as the present day society is prone to think (Lk 17:3-4). The Apostles understood well that faith and trust in the Lord are absolutely necessary for it (Lk 17:5-6).

At the conclusion of the episode of the rich young ruler (Lk 18:18-23) the disciples grasped the danger of riches for salvation. But Jesus tells his listeners that salvation is possible by God's help (18:26f.). The evangelist in fact depicts in the following chapter (19:1-10) the salvation of a rich man (Zacchaeus) by the initiative and help of the Lord (*kyrios*). Zacchaeus' behaviour is seen at least from the time of St. Bede and Bonaventure in contrast to the attitude of the rich young ruler since the former gave away half of his belongings to the poor (Lk 19:8), while the latter was not willing to do so.¹⁷

c) *The necessity of almsgiving and sharing*

From the above remarks the importance which Luke gives to the virtue of almsgiving may be already understood. Some more clarifications would be useful since this virtue plays a great role in the life of a disciple. Already in the preaching of John the Baptist (Lk 3:10-14) Luke insists very much on generosity and almsgiving. In the sermon on the plane (Lk 6:30) it is written, "give to everyone who begs from; and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again." During these occasions Matthew gives us a different picture (Mt 3:7-10; 5:42). The generosity of the centurion is described in Lk 7:5 and this generosity may be compared to the behaviour of the centurion at Cesarea (Ac 10:2,4,31) and the charity of Tabita (Ac 9:36).

16) The *mikroi* (little ones) in 17:2 may stand for the poor in the community. See, S. Legasse, *Jésus et l'enfant*, Paris, 1969, p. 31.

17) S. Beda, *In Lucae Ev. Expositio*, V, 1495-1500 (CCLat. 120, p. 333); S. Bonaventura, *In Lucam Cap. XIX*.

In Lk 11:41, a passage in the journey narrative, the evangelist introduces the idea of almsgiving in a strange context. Here it is said that the Pharisees and Lawyers are to practise this virtue in order to be clean within. In the Lucan symposium the privilege of the poor is stressed very much especially in 14:13 and 14:21¹⁸. In Mt 22:9, which is parallel to Lk 14:21, invitation of the poor to the wedding banquet is not found. Lk 14:13.21 insists on the necessity of inviting the poor for a feast and sharing the joy with them. We begin to enjoy the glory and blessings of enduring messianic feast already now if we share our love and interest with our brethren who are poor and with whom we share life and love from one common Father. Christian charity and sharing naturally transcends humanitarian idealism, for the Christian looks forward to the permanent possession of God's love in the Kingdom (Lk 14:15).¹⁹

Towards the end of the journey section Jesus tells the rich aristocrat to sell all that he owns and distribute the money to the poor in order to be saved. (18:22). The parallel accounts of Mark (10:21) and Matthew (19:21) do not insist on selling all that he owns. As we have seen above, the gesture of Zacchaeus in Lk 19:8 may be seen as a counterpart to the behaviour of the rich man in Lk 18:18-23. If the rich man is sad to sell his property and give it to the poor, Zacchaeus does it willingly. The rich man's attitude made the impression that salvation is impossible (18:24-27). Zacchaeus' generosity made salvation possible to his household (19:9). In the generous gesture of Zacchaeus we may see a prelude to the distribution of

18) Since many table scenes are set together in Lk 14 it may be called a symposium. Cf. X. De Meeue, *Composition de Luc 14 et Genre Sympositique*, ETL, 37 (1961) 847-870.

19) See Ac 2:45; 4:33-35; Rom 15:26; 2 Cor 6:10; Gal 2:10; 4:9.

There are many table scenes and banquet imageries in Lk., which are anticipations of the eschatological meal in the Kingdom. Cf. J. Navone, *Themes of St. Luke*, Rome, 1970, pp. 11-37. Also the communal and ecclesial "breaking of the bread" is the high point of Christian religious experience, looking forward to the great and glorious messianic banquet.

wealth narrated in the Acts.²⁰ The echo of the words of the Lord Jesus reported in Acts 20:35, "it is more blessed to give than to receive", may be seen in the confession of Zacchaeus, "behold, Lord, the half of my good I give to the poor..." (Lk 19:8). These considerations lead us to the conclusion that salvation is not an individual religious experience. A person is never alone in his or her salvation and therefore, concern for others is a requisite for the entry into the Kingdom. Charity and sharing with our brethren are the necessary means of Christian enlightenment, fulfilment, and happiness, which are founded on Jesus Christ.

d) *Other teachings of Lucan ascesis*

Important points of Lucan ascesis are found at the beginning of the journey narrative (10:21-11:13) and towards its end (18:1-30). They are simplicity, love of God, love for the neighbour and prayer. Because of their importance in the life of the follower of Jesus, the evangelist insists on them.²¹

One of the essential conditions for the attainment of eternal life is simplicity and hence the theme of revelation to the simple (*nēpιoi*) in 10:21-24. The privilege 'to see' Jesus and the Kingdom is reserved to the disciples, who are simple, not to the Kings and prophets (10:23-24). By joining two traditions, Mark and Q, in 10:21-24 Luke says that the disciples are babes, while the prophets and kings who desired to see the Messiah are wise. Similar teaching is given already in the prologue to the journey narrative (Lk 9:46-48). Here we read that only those who are the least among the disciples would be great. As

20) Ac 2:45; 4:33-35; Rom 15:26; 2 Cor 6:10; Gal 2:10; 4:9.

21) That Lk. 10, 21-11, 13 and 18, 1-30 make an inclusion to the Journey narrative is noted by many. Eg. R. Morgen-Thaler, *op. cit.*, 156-157; M. D. Goulder, *The chiastic Structure of the Lucan Journey*, *StTy*, 2 (1964) 195-202; C. H. Talbert, *op. cit.* 51-56. The words of J. Navone are pertinent to our context: "Every biblical travel story re-presents a way in which a better way of our being with others and our being-with Ultimate Reality is achieved." (*Towards a theology of Story*, Slough, 1977, p. 61).

a remedy against ambition, they are advised to follow the example of a child. It may be noted that in Lk 9:47 Jesus, to a certain extent, identifies himself with a child. In the third Gospel a child is placed near Jesus, while in the parallel Mk 9:36 it is in the midst of the disciples. Likewise, Luke has the expression "this child", while in Mk 9:37 we read the qualification of the child as "such a child". Thus the importance of the concept of simplicity in Lk is beyond doubt. The reversal of values which we cherish most is found frequently in the Gospel of Luke. See, for example, Lk 1:52;14:11;18:14.

The concept of simplicity in 10:21-24 is followed by a question and answer of a lawyer about eternal life (10:25-28). In his answer concerning the attainment of eternal life, citing Dt 6:5 (*Shema*) he himself says that to obtain eternal life one has to love the Lord God and one's neighbour.²² In a chiastic manner these ideas are dealt with in the following two pericopes. The theme of the love of the neighbour is developed in the parable of the good Samaritan (10:29-37) and the concept of the love of the Lord and the importance of hearing his words are described in the episode of Martha and Mary (10:38-42).²³ The parable gives a solution to the mission problem of Luke's Church. Who can be admitted into the Church? Who is the neighbour of a Christian? These were some of the questions asked and discussed in the early Church, Cf. Acts 10 and 15. The ideal behaviour of the Samaritan gives an answer to the above questions. The incident is a good illustration of the point that any one who observes the covenant law of mercy, whether he be Jew, Samaritan or Gentile, can be a member of the people of God. Christian discipleship is opened to a man who practises universal love. Jesus' answer to Martha in 10. 42 is famous. He tells her that Mary has chosen the better part which is not to be taken from her. This better part is discipleship and following Jesus and one has to find ultimate fulfilment

22) In Mk and Mt the question is about the great commandment, while in Lk. it is about eternal life. The question in Lk 10:25 is made similar to the one in Lk 18:18.

23) Cf. W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*, Berlin, 1966 ad loc.

and value of life in it. His strength indeed lies in the word of God which he is obliged to hear and keep (Lk. 8:19-21; 10:39; 11:27-28.)

After the episode of Martha and Mary Luke speaks about prayer (11:1-13) which is a must for the hearing of the word of God. The theme of prayer is introduced with the Lord's prayer which is essentially a prayer for the coming of the Kingdom (11:2).²⁴ In 11:5-8 we read the parable of the importunate friend which illustrates persistence in prayer, and the effectiveness of prayer is taught in 11:9-13.

Prayer in Lk. is a necessary means of salvation and its great importance may be seen both in the life of Jesus and that of the disciples.²⁵ The evangelist presents a scene of prayer at important moments of the life of Jesus. The baptism of Jesus (3:21), his choice of the apostles (6:12), the confession of Peter (9:18), the transfiguration (9:28, 29), passion (22:40, 44, 45) and crucifixion (23:35) take place in an atmosphere of prayer. Such a presentation of the scenes is not found in the parallel accounts of Mark and Matthew. The main duty of the disciples, according to Acts 6:4, is to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. They prayed under persecution (Ac 4:24-31; 7:59f) and before doing miracles (Ac 9:40; 16:25) as well as before making choice of missionaries (Ac 13:2-3; 14:23). The journey of Paul to Jerusalem was an important act in his life and before the commencement of it the disciples prayed assiduously (Ac 21:5).²⁶ At the close of his journey to Jerusalem Paul is found praying in the temple (Ac 22:17). We may notice that at the end of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem he declared the temple as a house of prayer (Lk 19:46). Interesting

24) The position of the 'Our Father' in Mt. is in a quite different place (Mt 6:9-13).

25) L. Monloubou, *La prière selon Saint Luc*, Paris, 1976; L. Feldkamper, *Der betende Jesus als Heiismittler nach Lukas*, St. Augustin, 1978; A. Drago, *Gesù uomo di preghiera nel vangelo di Luca*, Padova, 1975; S. S. Smalley, *Spirit, Kingdom and prayer in Luke Acts*, NT, 15 (1973) 59-71.

26) Noteworthy is also that Jesus prays before the announcement of his exodus in Jerusalem (Lk 9:28, 29, 31).

is also to observe that at the beginning and end of the Gospel of Luke we find a scene of prayer in the temple (Lk 1:8ff. & 24:53). The importance of prayer in the life of the disciples, therefore, cannot be doubted.

The themes found in Lk 18:1-30 correspond to that described in 10:21-11, 13. By means of the parables in, 18, 1-14 the concept of prayer (necessity of prayer, 18:1-8, and the way to pray, 18:9-14) is brought forward. Especially the parable of the importunate widow (18:1-8) shows that the Kingdom is in response to prayer.²⁷ In 18:15-30 there is, first of all, the revelation to the children (18:15-17). The humble prayer of the publican (18:13), the logion on humility (18:14) as well as the episode on the children are a good thematic composition. Welcoming the Kingdom of God like a child is a requisite for entrance into it (18:17). Luke writes *brephē* (infant) in 18:15 instead of the *paidia* (children) in the parallel Mk. 10:13. This change is in order to stress upon the idea of simplicity and humility here. Infants and babes have to depend totally on their parents for existence. This, therefore, can symbolize well that one has to rely completely on God. The concept expressed here towards the end of Jesus' journey is practically the same as the concept of simplicity developed in 10:21-24. Lk 18:15-17 is followed by the question of a rich ruler about eternal life (18:18). Here Jesus himself answers the question citing Dt 5:16 (decalogue) and the necessity of observing the commandments is pointed out. The Lord further invites the rich ruler to distribute his money to the poor (love of the neighbour) and follow him (love of the Lord) (18:22). The subsequent verses (18:23-30) continue to illustrate the conditions necessary for the love of the Lord and the attainment of eternal life, namely, renunciation and detachment.

It may be noted that the basic requirements of Christian discipleship described in the journey narrative are fulfilled in the person of Zacchaeus, who, for this reason, is presented as an

27) There is a parallelism between Lk 11:5-8 (the importunate man) and 18:1-8 (the importunate widow). Originally these formed a double parable. Cf. J. Jeremias, *The parables of Jesus*, London, 1963, pp. 157ff.

ideal disciple at the end of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. Already at the beginning of the story (19:2) Luke depicts Zacchaeus as a humble figure since he is portrayed one of the tax collectors who were sinners and despicable in Jewish eyes. Furthermore, Zacchaeus is a man of small stature (*mikros*) (19:3). More than his physical stature one may see here his childlike attitude and openness to receive Jesus and the message of the Kingdom. We may remember that Jesus in his proclamation extends special privilege and protection to little ones.²⁸ Lk. 19:8, an important and key verse of the story, describes Zacchaeus' conversion to the Lord (*kyrios*). As we have remarked above, in this redactional verse, Zacchaeus' detachment from wealth, his renunciation and the spirit of sharing may be seen.

4) Discipleship, a march on the 'way'

We have pointed out that there are sufficient evidences, especially in the journey section, to see Jesus' ministry as a way or a course. With his death and resurrection Jesus ends his salvific journey to Jerusalem and the disciples are to continue from Jerusalem this way of salvation to the ends of the earth. Jesus preached and taught the good news of the Kingdom from Galilee, Samaria and all throughout Judea to Jerusalem (Lk 33:5). The disciples are told to continue this mission (in a reverse order) from Jerusalem to all Judea, Samaria and to the very ends of the earth (Lk 24:47; Ac 1:8; 23:11).

These are already indications of the fact that the mission of the disciples is presented in terms of the way motif in the second volume of Luke. The way (*hodos*) acquires the meaning of Church mission in Acts 13:10. Jesus' mission to Jerusalem and his journey to heaven is expressed by the verb *poreuesthai* (to go) especially in the central section of Luke.²⁹ The apostolic

28) See Mt 10:42; 18:6, 10:14; Lk 9:48; 12:32. Cf. W. P. LOEWE, *Towards an Interpretation of Lk 19:1-10*, CBQ, 36 (1974) 325, 330

29) Out of the 49 occurrences of this verb in Lk, 25 are in the central section. In the introduction to the journey narrative (Lk. 9: 51-57) it occurs 5 times. In Acts 1:10-11 *poreuesthai* seems to be a technical term to indicate Jesus' journey to heaven.

journey of preaching, likewise, is indicated by the employment of this verb in the Acts. Paul's mission to the Gentiles is expressed by *poreuesthatai* in 18:6; 22:2; and 28:26; his journey to Jerusalem is indicated by the same verb in 19:1; 19:21; 20:22; 25:20. See also Ac. 5:20,41; 8:26,27, 36, 39. Noteworthy is the fact that in Acts 9:31 the verb is used to express the 'journey' of the Church in the fear of the Lord. Luke is apparently influenced by the Septuagint in the use of the verb in his double work. *poreuesthai* is employed in this Old Testament version to show the march on the way commanded by God without turning aside to the right or left. Dt 5:32f; 9:16; 28:13; I Kings 3:14.

Parallel to the way of Jesus, Christianity that preaches the way of salvation and through which one obtains salvation is also presented in the Acts as a way (*hodos*). The term *hodos* is used five times absolutely in the second volume of Luke (Ac 9:2; 19:9; 19:23; 24:4; 24:22) as a designation for the Christian faith and group.³⁰ In Acts 16:17 and 14:22 Christianity is presented as a way of salvation. Though the term *hodos* is not found in Acts 14:22 the way motif is discernible here since it speaks about *entering* into the Kingdom through many trials. In depicting the Church as the way commanded by God himself (Ac 13:10) Luke shows his conviction that only in Christianity can God's commandments be properly kept and salvation obtained³¹. Christian religion alone can lay the claim to be the

30) E. Repo, *Der 'Weg' als Selbstbezeichnung des Urchristentums*, Helsinki, 1964; S. V. McCasland, "The Way", JBL, 77 (1958) 22-230.

It is interesting that even today in the Syro-Malabar Church, a Church of apostolic origin, Christianity is called a "way" (*marga*) and the new converts are qualified as "those who dwell in the "way" (*margavasi*). This concept indeed is a link between Christianity and Hinduism which has the theology of the three ways (*marga*): "way of knowledge (jñāna *marga*), "way of work" (*karma marga*) and "way of devotion" (*bhakti marga*). As noted before the essential conditions to walk in the Christian way are, love of God, love of one's neighbour and prayer.

31) By designating the Christian religion by the term 'way' Luke's concern is to represent the new religion of Jesus in its own proper character, still preserving the link with Israel Cf. E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles, A Commentary*, Oxford, 1971, p. 658.

true Israel since it follows the Leader of Life and shows the way to life eternal.

The importance of missionary activity in the life of every disciple should be evident from the considerations on the theology of the way in Luke-Acts. In connection with the way of Jesus to Jerusalem intense work for the Lord and the Kingdom is demanded of the followers of Jesus (Lk 9:60; 10:1ff. – beginning of the journey; Lk 19:11-28 – end of the journey). Especially in Lk 19:11-28 (the parable of the pounds) we find that the life of the disciples should not be an idle waiting for the Kingdom, but each one is instructed to increase his 'talent' according to his capacity. Their life is one of 'doing business' for the Lord till he comes again (Lk. 19: 13; cf. also 12:35-48). If they are lazy and useless, severe judgement would fall upon them (Lk. 19:27; 12:47f.). Every follower of Jesus should be active and dynamic because he has taken up a journey or a march on a way which is the continuation of the life of Jesus, who is the way, truth and life (Jn 14:6)³²

Conclusion

A perusal of the concept of discipleship in the journey narrative shows that this concept is an austere one and that Luke is more socially conscious than the other synoptics or John. In a particular way there is an insistence on the communitarian aspect of discipleship in Lk Acts (cf. Acts 2:44-45, 4:32,34,35). Luke is categorically against a falsely platonic withdrawal from the love of our fellow human beings and involvement in the affairs of this world is encouraged by him (Lk 12:35-48; 19:11-28). The disciple indeed journeys towards the Kingdom but he may not forget to adjust himself to the actualities of present day life on earth. This may be considered Luke's contribution to the theology of discipleship in the New Testament.

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32) On the way the disciple is exposed to the insecurities, but has the consolation of encountering something new. That one is on the way also means that one is away from the starting point and it demands of him to leave behind the useless relics of the past. Cf. J. Pathrapankal, *Christianity as a 'Way' according to the Acts of the Apostles*, Les Actes des Apôtres, Traditions, rédaction, théologie, par J. Kremer, (BETL, XLVIII) Leuven, 1979, pp. 533-539.

'Discipleship' according to the Gospel of John

The contemporary exegetical studies give emphasis to the revelatory aspect of the Johannine theology. Salvation is presented in John under the aspect of the 'eschatological revelation of God in Jesus Christ'. The Johannine Christ is none but the Revealer, the last and decisive Word of God to the humanity¹. The vocabulary of the Fourth Gospel is indicative of this. There we find a whole series of words of revelation such as: bear witness (*marturein*), manifest (*phaneroun*), show (*deiknunai*), make known (*gnorizein*), interpret (*exegeisthai*), teach (*didaskein*), proclaim (*krazein*), announce (*apaggellein*), speak (*lalein*) and say (*legein*). (The word speak (*lalein*) is used in Jn 58 times, and being a Johannine word of revelation, is usually applied to Christ in this Gospel. Corresponding to this variety of words, the portrait of Jesus the Revealer is presented in John in a variety of ways. Accordingly the response from the part of man is also described by John in terms corresponding to the portrait of Jesus.

One of the ways in which John presents Jesus the Revealer is as Master or Teacher, the first title that is given to Jesus by the first disciples is 'Rabbi' or Teacher (1: 38)². It is by calling Jesus 'Rabbi' that the two disciples of John the Baptist follow Jesus, leaving their former master (1: 37-38). Later Jesus is said to have made more disciples than John and on account of this he had to leave Judea (4: 1- 3).

Before the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus is seen going up to the hills and there sitting down with his disciples as a master who gives his teaching(6:3-4). Later he is seen teaching in the synagogue of Capernaum(6: 59) and in the Temple of

1. Cf R. Schnackenburg, "Offenbarung und Glaube", *Bib Leb*, 7(1966), 16.5)

2. Whenever the book is not mentioned in the biblical references of this article, the reference is to the Gospel of John.

Jerusalem(7: 14, 28; 8: 20). The High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching and Jesus answered him saying: "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in the synagogues and in temple"(18:19-20). When Jesus told the Jews that "they would seek him and would not find him" (7:34), they said to one another: "Where does this man intend to go that we shall not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?" (7:35). The Jews marvelled at his teaching because he taught so well in spite of the fact that he had never studied (7:15). Jesus accepts the title of 'Rabbi' or 'Teacher'³.

Jesus presents himself as 'Teacher' or 'Master', not in the ordinary sense of the term, but in the sense of the Son of Man, who is the Revealer of the Father. Hence the response from the part of man also takes on the character of 'becoming disciple', but in a peculiar sense corresponding to the nature of the revelatory character of Jesus the Master.

The disciples of Jesus

The term 'disciple' is common to all the four Gospels. John uses it often to designate the group of 'the Twelve' chosen and taken out of the world by Jesus (6:70; 15:19) to follow him and to accompany him. The Twelve really constitute a community with Jesus, according to the then existing Jewish model of master-disciples communities. This was so well known among his contemporaries that they questioned him about his disciples during the Jewish trial recorded in the Passion narratives (18.19).

However, the notions of master and disciples in the case of Jesus and his disciples far surpassed the Jewish model. The master-disciple relationship in this case had a more profound significance and implied a relationship of a quite different order. The disciple is one who has recognised in the teaching of Jesus the words of eternal life (6:68) and in the person of Jesus the Holy one of God(6:69), and has decided to be formed at the school of Jesus and to be attached to him. The condition of the disciple, which was originally a privilege of a selected group of

3. 3:2, 10; 11:28; 13:13-14; 20:16.

particular men, becomes in the Johannine theology the response of all the believers to the word of salvation⁴.

Call to discipleship (Jn 1:35– 51)

This section falls into several closely linked scenes of different persons following Jesus as: Andrew and the unnamed disciple (John) (vv. 35–39), Simon Peter (vv. 40–42), Philip (vv. 43–44) and Nathanael (45–51). Putting together all these scenes, John has created a beautiful scenario of 'Call to Discipleship'.

History and theology

In fact, the call of three of the first disciples in John, namely, Andrew, John and Simon, is also presented in the Synoptic Gospels (MK 1:16–20), but presented as taking place in a different place and in different situations. In the Forth Gospel the call takes place at Bethany in Transjordan (1:28) and the first disciples were disciples of John the Baptist. In the Synoptic Gospels the call took place on the shores of the sea of Galilee and it was in the context of their fishing. The standard harmonization is that Jesus first called the disciples as John narrates but that they subsequently returned to their previous life in Galilee until Jesus came there to recall them to service, as the Synoptics narrate. There may be some basic truth in this reconstruction, but it goes considerably beyond the evidence of the Gospel narratives. In John, once the disciples are called, they remain Jesus' disciples without the slightest suggestion of their returning to normal livelihood. Nor in the Synoptic account of the call in Galilee is there any indication that these men have seen Jesus before. In fact, Luke seems embarrassed as to why these men should follow Jesus on first contact, and he changes the Marcan order of the material, in order to make the scene more reasonable. In 4:38–5:11 Luke puts the healing of Peter's mother-in-law before the call of Peter to provide the motive of a miracle to explain why Peter follows Jesus. Such a procedure would scarcely have been necessary, if it were pre-supposed that Peter and Andrew already knew Jesus and had heard the testimony of John the Baptist.

4. cf A. Schulz, *Junger des Herrn*, Munich, 1964, 80 f.

Nevertheless, John's information is quite plausible. There is an echo in Acts 2:21-22 that the first disciples actually had joined Jesus at the time of his baptism. There Peter insists that the one to take Juda's place must be one of the men "who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John".

Even if historical information underlines John's account, there is no doubt that John is giving here not a mere historical account but a theological one. The historical scene has been re-organized under theological orientation. Jn 1:35-51 John is presenting a conspectus of vocation to discipleship, as he has come to realize it and experience it, having lived it for many years.

Essential notes of the call to discipleship

We shall give below the text of the first description of the call of the disciples in 1:35-42, which presents the call of John himself, indicating the essential notes of discipleship as John looks at it.

1) vv. 35-36	The next day... he looked at Jesus as he walked.	ELECTION & CALL
2)	and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"	HUMAN TESTIMONY
3) v. 37	The two disciples heard him say this	HEARING
4)	and they followed Jesus	FOLLOWING
5) v. 38	Jesus turned and... said to them, "What do you seek?"	SEEKING
6)	And they said... "Rabbi.... where are you staying?"	FINDING
7) v. 39	He said... "Come and See"	COMING & SEEING
8)	They came and saw..... and they remained with him.	REMAINING
9) v. 40-42	One of the two...Andrew... said... "We have found the Messiah"...and brought him to Jesus.	WITH JESUS
		MISSIONARY
		SHARING

1. Election & call

The first two verses 35-36 introduce Jesus as walking by the disciples who were standing with John the Baptist. Also in the Synoptics the call of the disciples take place on the occasion of Jesus passing by them (Mk 1:16-20 and 2:14). This seems to contain the all decisive 'election-call' of God. In the OT we have instances of Yahweh 'passing by' before 'Moses' face on Mount Sinai (Ex 33:19) and before Elijah on Mount Horeb (3Kg 19:13). The apparent casualness 'walking by' is, in fact, an all decisive election and call by God. What is apparent chance is divine ordinance. But the divine ordinance transcends all human understanding. The human reporting of it, because it is simply incapable to see into the totality of the divine occurrence, can be no more than an everyday chance affair. Hence the decisive element of the divine election and call to discipleship.

2. Human testimony

John the Baptist looks at Jesus passing by and says: "Behold, the Lamb of God." It is John who makes the two disciples aware of the presence of Jesus 'passing by'. Hence it is often the human agencies who make us aware of God's election and call. The divine initiative of election and call is concretely manifested in the witnessing of others as that of John the Baptist which offers a challenge to follow Jesus.

3. Hearing

The two disciples heard the words of John the Baptist and it enabled them to hear the call of God and consequently made them to follow Jesus. So this hearing is not a mere physical hearing. In John all cannot 'hear' the voice of God or Jesus. Only those who are 'of the Truth' hear the voice of Jesus (18:37). Only those who are 'of God' hear the words of God (8:47). 'To be of' in John refers to a relationship or union with someone. Therefore only a person who is constantly united with God in prayer, who lives constantly on the same wave-length as that of God, can hear the words or the voice of God calling him. In Jn 10:26-27 Jesus tells the Jews: "You do not believe because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me." As the sheep

recognise their master's voice, through a constant being with him and listening to him, a disciple of Jesus is one who becomes attuned to the voice of Jesus or God through a constant union with him in prayer.

4. Following

The invitation 'follow me' is characteristic of the call to discipleship. In 1:43 Jesus is said to have found Philip and said to him "Follow me". Also in the Synoptic account of the 'call of the disciples' Jesus calls them by the same invitation "Follow me"⁵. A disciple is one who follows Jesus as the Light (8:12), as the Shepherd (10:4,27) or Teacher (12: 26; 13:36 f; 21:19,22). In this section itself the theme of following occurs in vv.38,40 and 43.

The Gospels make use of the verb *akolouthein* to denote following Jesus⁶. The statistical evidence shows that its special use is strictly limited to discipleship of following Jesus. All other references in the NT speak of a following which has no religious significance. The nature or implication of 'following Jesus' is evident from the fact that the disciples leave everything to follow Jesus⁶. This implies that the following means a self-commitment in a sense which breaks all other ties(Mt 8:22; Lk 9:6 f). Thus Jesus' call demands of those to whom it is addressed an extreme form of radicalism. This comes into bold relief in Jesus' words to the disciple who sought to go and bury his father: "Leave the dead to bring their dead; but as for you go and proclaim the Kingdom of God"(LK 9: 60).

In John the 'following Jesus' implies a service of Jesus and being united with Jesus: "If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am there shall my servant be also" (12:26). As it is explained in the parable of the seed that falls to the ground and dies, 'following Jesus' involves a dying to the self and living to God. This dying to the self can involve even physical death as it is clear from the words of Jesus to peter "Where I am going you cannot follow me now; but you shall follow afterward" (13:36). Later when peter was asked by Jesus to 'follow him', it really meant for Peter a 'following' that implied martyrdom:

5. Cf. Mk. 1: 16-20; 2:14 and parallels.

6. Mk. 1:18; 10:28; Lk. 5:11.

'Truly truly I say to you.... when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go.' This he said to show by what death he was to glorify God. And after this he said to him, 'Follow me' (21:18-19).

5. Seeking

When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'what do you seek?' (v.38). These are the first words of Jesus in the fourth Gospel, and it is a question addressed to those 'who follow him'. 'To search for Jesus' is a theme of importance to John. There are several cases of searching for Jesus and sometimes not properly such as searching him in view of eating the bread (6:24f), of killing him (7:1, 19f; 8:37, 40). [Jesus tells the Jews that they will finally search him more seriously and will not find him (7:34, 36, 8:21).

In this context the searching is combined with finding. Andrew, one of the two disciples who followed Jesus, tells his brother Simon, "we have found the Messiah" (v. 4). Philip who followed Jesus, when he met Nathanael, tells him: "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote" (v. 45). Hence the question of Jesus in this context is of theological importance relating to the process of discipleship. It is a question addressed to everyone who would follow Jesus, touching on the basic need of man that causes him to turn to God or Jesus the revelation of God. The call to discipleship is an answer to the basic search of man to find something lasting, surpassing temporality, change and death, namely, to find God himself. Hence vocation is not simply a matter of the need of the church or of a community, but it is basically a matter of the personal need of the individual in search of personal fulfilment.

6. Finding

The answer of the disciples is again a question: "Rabbi where are you staying?" (v. 38). This question implies that what they are searching for is nothing else but to find the dwelling place of Jesus. In fact the question of Jesus seems to have insinuated that a disciple is one who should seek to be with Jesus

and who should find fulfilment in nothing else but in being with Jesus. Therefore the answer of the disciples corresponds to the implied meaning of the question of Jesus.

John refers several times to 'where Jesus is and remains'.⁷ The ultimate purpose of the work of Jesus is to reveal to the disciples this 'where' of his living and to take the disciples there with him. Speaking of discipleship Jesus says: "If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also" (12:26). When he was about to depart from this world Jesus tells the disturbed disciples. "When I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (14:2-3). Hence the discipleship demands that one who follows Jesus should seek to be with him and expect to find fulfilment in being with Jesus alone.

7. Coming and seeing

At the expression of their desire to discover the dwelling place of Jesus and to be with him Jesus extends to them the invitation: "come and see". Both the verbs 'come' and 'see' are in John terms indicating faith. 'Coming to Jesus' is the same as 'believing in Jesus': "I am the Bread of Life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst" (6:35). Again 'to see Jesus' is the same as 'to believe in Jesus'. "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life" (6:40). Both these terms, however, emphasize the experiential dimension of faith. 'To believe' is to come to Jesus, establishing a personal relationship with him, and thus to see him for what he really is. Hence the invitation is to relate themselves to him in faith in such away that they come to experience what it really means to remain with him. A disciple is one who lives a life of faith in Jesus, through which he comes to get a deeper insight into the person of Jesus and grows in an authentic experience of the Life in Jesus.

7. cf. Jn 7: 34f; 8:14, 19, 21 f; 13:33, 36; 14:3; 17:24.

8. Remaining with Jesus

At the invitation of Jesus they came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him (v. 39). The term *remain* (*nenein*) is of great theological importance in John. John uses this term 66 times out of the total 112 occurrences of the term in the NT. He uses this term to express the permanency of relationship between the Father and the Son (14:10) and between the Son and the Christian (15:4-7). It is a relationship of mutual indwelling presence of the Father, Son and the believer. The imagery of the vine and the branches, which is the classical Johannine imagery to express the mutual abiding presence of Jesus and the disciples is described in John 15:1-17. According to this description the mutual abiding presence of Jesus and the disciples is the source of all vitality and activity of the disciples: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who remains in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (15:5). It is an intimate union that expresses itself in a way of Life lived in love: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love" (15:9). At the end of the description of this relationship Jesus says: "This I command you, to love one another" (15:17).

In this context, though apparently John affirms the simple fact of the two disciples spending the day with Jesus, the very use of the significant term 'remain' in such a context as this cannot but suggest overtones of the deep and abiding fellowship established between Jesus and his disciples. While physically the disciples might come and go, their relationship with Jesus has about it the character of constancy and stability.⁸ This is all the more true because it comes as the culmination of the whole process of discipleship as described here. In fact the final stage of discipleship according to John is to be where Jesus is 12:26; 14: 2-3). Therefore the statement "they remained with Jesus" in this context shows the last stage of that process of the call to discipleship in the Johannine perspective. It is the fellowship and communion with Jesus resulting from the life of faith to which he invited them.

8. cf C. B. Cousar, "Expository article on John 1:29-42", *Interpretation* 31 (1977), 406.

9. Missionary sharing

After having been with Jesus the disciples go out, and one of the two, Andrew, shares his experience with Simon, his brother, and brings him to Jesus (vv. 40-42). This shows the missionary dimension of discipleship in John. A disciple is necessarily one who experiences Christ and shares this experience with his fellowmen: For John, missionary work is nothing else but sharing of and witnessing to what one has experienced in his abiding with Christ and thus leading others to the same experience (1 Jn 1:1-3; Jn 20:30-31). John the Baptist proclaims his experience of Jesus "I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God" (1:34), and thus leads his disciples to the same experience (1:35-42). Having experienced Jesus, one cannot keep it for himself, but has to share it with others. Andrew brings his brother Simon (1:41-42), and Philip shares his experience with Nathanael (1:43-50).

Discipleship and deepening of experience of Christ

The missionary sharing presupposes an experience of Christ which becomes ever deeper on account of the ever-growing life of faith in Jesus. This gradual deepening of experience of Christ can be traced in the scene of call to discipleship as John presents it. In Jn. 1:35-51 we can see a gradual deepening of insight and a profounder realization of who it is that the disciples are following. This is indicated by the different titles that the disciples attribute to Jesus (vv. 35-42): Jesus is recognised as 'Rabbi' (teacher) and 'Messiah'. In vv. 43-45 he is recognised as the 'One of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote'. In vv. 46-50 they recognise him as the 'Son of God' and 'King of Israel'. Finally in v. 51 they are promised that they will have a greater vision of Jesus as the 'Son of Man', being the seat of the presence of God, namely, in whom God's glory is present and is manifested. This they saw in the miracle of Jesus at Cana and believed in him (2:11).

We cannot say that this deepening of their understanding developed in two or three days as it is narrated in John. Both John and the Synoptics witness that a full understanding of Jesus by the disciples took place only after the resurrection. So John is placing on the lips of the disciples a synopsis of the

gradual understanding that took place throughout the ministry till after the resurrection. John is using this occasion of the call narrative of the disciples to summarize discipleship in its process of development. Therefore a disciple is one who, living with Jesus, gradually obtains a deeper and deeper insight into the person of Jesus and shares this experience with others.

Conditions of discipleship

The Gospel of John lays down certain conditions to become a real disciple of Jesus. Anyone who believes in Jesus does not automatically become a disciple of Jesus. One should possess certain qualities that will make him a disciple of Jesus.

1. Remaining in the Word (Jn 8:31-32)

Jesus declares to the Jews who had believed in him: "If you remain in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (8:31-32). It is to those who believed in him that Jesus tells these words. Therefore 'to remain in the Word of Jesus' is a condition to become a true disciple of Jesus. In 2 Jn 9 we hear, "One who does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God". Elsewhere, the picture is reversed and the word of God abides in the believer: "You do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe him whom he has sent" (5:38). It is really the same thing to abide in the word and to have the word abide in oneself.⁹ Therefore to remain in the word of Jesus' means to let his word remain in oneself and have it as a permanent source of one's life.

It is by allowing Jesus' words to remain in us or to be the constant source of inspiration for our life that we are able to remain in Jesus or to be in fellowship with him, which in turn will make us his disciples. This interaction of 'Jesus' words remaining in us' and 'our remaining in Jesus' which constitutes the discipleship is expressed in Jn 15:7-8: "If you abide in me, and my word abide in you.... you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples".

9, cf R. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, vol. I, 1966,
355.

Abiding in Jesus is the final stage of the call to discipleship as we saw in Jn 1:35-39. Thus discipleship is the final stage of the faith experience. This we can see from the various stages of faith experience that constitute the call to discipleship in 1:35-39. Thus we have 'hearing' (v. 37), 'following' (v. 37), 'seeking' (v. 38), 'coming' (v. 39), 'seeing' (v. 39) and finally 'remaining with him' (v. 39). The attachment to Christ becomes gradually a deep-rooted relationship of communion between Jesus and his disciples. At this stage the faith of the disciples is complete and they become real disciples who can proclaim Christ to others.

Only such an advanced stage of faith, which leads to discipleship will give strength to the believers to stand the test and overcome the offence that the revealer and his word signify for the world. Faith at this stage is not an immediate assent, but steadfastness that gives character to genuine discipleship¹⁰. This is the stage in which one enjoys the 'knowledge of Truth' and consequently the freedom proper to the children of God (8:31-32).

2. Hating one's life (12:25)

This passage occurs in the context of Jesus declaring the arrival of the Hour for the Son of Man to be glorified. The glorification of Jesus implies his suffering, death and resurrection. The hour of Jesus is the hour in which Jesus will be lifted up on the cross (12:32-33). But the hour does not end in that sorrowful note. It is also the hour in which Jesus will be lifted up in resurrection and thus draw all men to himself to give them life (12:32,24)¹¹. It is in this context of referring to Jesus' hour of glorification (suffering, death and resurrection) that John introduces the parable of the seed that dies to produce much fruit (12:24) which is, in fact, an illustration of the process of glorification. It is the very same parable that is applied to the life-style of the disciple too, who will follow the life pattern of his master: "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (12:25).

10. R. Bultmann, *The Gospel according to John*, Oxford, 1971, 433.

11. Cf R. Brown, op. cit. 469-470.

The basic contrast in the saying in v. 25 is between loving and hating one's life. This pair of opposites is well attested in the biblical tradition, and the meaning is clear from a comparison of the saying in Lk. 14:26 with its parallel in Mt 10:37.

Lk 14:26 "If one does not hate his father and mother.... and even his own self...."

Mt 10:37 "He who loves father or mother more than me...."

So 'to hate' means 'not to love someone more than Jesus'. In this sense John condemns the love of one's life in this world. Elsewhere we find condemnations of love of darkness (3:19) and love of glory among men (12:43). In Johannine dualism these three elements - darkness, this world and human glory - are but different facets of the realm of evil. And a love of any one of them represents an unwillingness to love Jesus above all¹².

In stressing the need to hate one's life in this world in order to live eternally, v. 25 repeats in non-parabolic form the theme of v. 24, namely, the need of dying in order to live, though the application is slightly different. In v. 24 Jesus had to die in order to bring others to life. In v. 25 the follower of Jesus cannot escape death any more than his master, but must pass through death to his own eternal life.

3. Serving Jesus (12:26)

The words of Jesus about hating one's life are followed immediately by his words about following him in terms of 'serving him'. "If anyone serves me he must follow me; and where I am there shall my servant be also; if anyone serves me, the Father will honour him" (v. 26). This is a Johannine variant of the saying of Jesus in Mk 8:34. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me"¹³. In Mark it precedes the saying on saving or loosing one's life, while in John it follows that.

When the Synoptic Gospels speak of 'coming after Jesus', John speaks of 'serving Jesus'. In the Synoptic Gospels the women

12. Cf R. E. Brown, op. cit, 474

13. Cf J. Schneider, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, Berlin 1976, 230

who followed Jesus are said to have served him (Mk 15:41; Lk 10:40). Therefore this 'serving Jesus' seems to be connected with the discipleship. John sees discipleship as 'serving Jesus'.

Jesus' view of 'service' grows out of the OT command of love for one's neighbour, which he takes and links with the command of love for God to constitute the substance of the divinely willed ethical conduct of his followers. In so doing he purifies the concept of service from the distortions which it had suffered in Judaism. The decisive point is that he sees in it the thing which makes a man his disciple¹⁴.

Diakonein (to serve) becomes in the New Testament a comprehensive term for any loving assistance rendered to the neighbour. It is understood as full and perfect sacrifice as the offering of life which is the very essence of service, of being for others, whether in life or in death. Thus the concept of 'service' achieves its final theological depth in John where 'service' is made a command for all his disciples (Jn. 12:26). The association of v. 26 to v. 25 shows that discipleship of Jesus Christ demands 'service' even unto death. To serve the neighbour, Christ or God is one and the same thing.

Serving Jesus, following Jesus and remaining with Jesus: The words "If anyone serves me he must follow me, and where I am, there shall my servant be also" show that 'serving Jesus', 'following Jesus' and 'remaining with Jesus' are all parallel phrases expressing the reality of discipleship. If 'serving Jesus' involves a dying to self, 'following Jesus' is a pathway of suffering and death along which the disciple has to walk behind his Lord. This is evident in the peculiar scene in which the Risen Lord gives the command to Peter 'follow me' (21:19f) as we have already explained above. The sum-total of this serving and following Jesus is therefore indicated in the words "and where I am there shall my servant be also" (12:26).

The glorification of Jesus involves death and resurrection. This is indicated by the parable of the seed that falls to the ground to bear much fruit. And the disciple is to be with Jesus in this total process of glorification. Therefore the 'serving' and

14. Cf. H. W. Beyer, art on 'diakoneo', *tdnt*, II, 84.

'following' of the disciple, while describing the earthly pathway of suffering and death, it is not to be separated from its continuation in the resurrection: "Father, I desire that they also, whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given me" (17:24).¹⁵

This is indicated in the last part of the Johannine statement on discipleship: "If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him" (12:26). Just as for Jesus the exaltation on the cross is at the same time his glorification, so also for the disciple, serving and following him and being where he is means participating in his glory.¹⁶

Access to Jesus through discipleship: The train of thought in 12:23-26 is unit compact: Jesus and his exaltation can be spoken of only in terms of its significance for his followers. One can treat of Jesus and of those who belong to him only together. If we can regard vv. 20-26 as one unit, then we have here the answer to the question of access to Jesus. It is in the context of the Greeks who sought for access to Jesus that he declare his glorification and the subsequent saying about discipleship. Whoever seeks for access to Jesus is directed to the way of the Risen Lord. The Risen Lord is, however, not directly accessible, say in moments of ecstatic or mystic vision which suspend the historical existence of man. Rather, the way to him is the way of discipleship, the way of service, the way of following his footsteps the way of being with him in suffering and glory.

Love: the keynote of discipleship

At the beginning of the farewell discourse Jesus tells his disciples: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (13:35). The distinguishing mark of the disciples of Jesus is brotherly love. The reciprocal love within the community is the criterion of the discipleship of Jesus for those outside.

15. C. E. Schweizer, "Discipleship and Belief in Jesus as Lord from Jesus to the Hellenistic church", *nts* 2 (1955-56), 94.

16. R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, Oxford, 1971, 426.

It is in the context of the departure of Jesus that the new commandment of love is given, which, if obeyed, will keep the spirit of Jesus alive among them as they continue their life in this world. The commandment of loving one another appears again in the Last Discourse in 15:12 and 17, and is the subject of discussion in 1 Jn 2:7-9; 3, 23; 4:21, 5:2-3, 2 Jn 5. Though love is presented as a commandment, probably to show the covenant aspect of the existence of the Christian community,¹⁷ it is more than a commandment. It is a gift. It comes from the Father through Jesus to those who believe in him. In 15:9 we read, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you". In 13:34 and 15:12 Jesus is presented as the source of the disciples' love for one another. It is a love that gives life to men.

The 'love of one another' which is characteristic of the disciple is the love within the community of the believers who are in a special way children of God the Father through faith in Jesus Christ (1:12-13). The 'one another' that the disciples should love is correctly defined in 1 Jn 3:14 as 'our brothers', that is, those within the community.

The new world within the world

The circle of the disciples of Jesus who love one another forms a new world within the world. This is because the love itself there takes on a form that is strange to the world. In the community of the disciples the love of one another is grounded in the love of God which is encountered in the Revealer. By it all human love is peculiarly modified, in a way that both limits and broadens it. God is the 'middle term' in all loving, and all loving becomes the proclamation of Jesus: "I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me" (17:23). This new mode of existence of discipleship, of loving one another, is limited to the circle of those who form part of this new world. But it has also a sort of universal openness in the fact that the world always is

17. Cf. D. Mollat, *Saint Jean, Maître Spiritual*, Paris, 1976, 126-127.

challenged to, and has the possibility of, being included within this circle of the disciples.

Conclusion

In the Gospel of John Jesus is presented as revealer and teacher, and the response to him is described in terms of discipleship. John is presenting discipleship as it was experienced in the Post-Easter Church. Unlike the Synoptics John presents the discipleship in terms of a life of faith and union with Jesus which demands a radical renunciation of all other connections. It is not boats, nets, custom-tables and families which the disciples have to abandon, but even religious authorities, as John the Baptist, who possess only a temporary authority and bearers of salvation who could be rivals of Jesus. Their mission is no longer a 'fishing of men', but a testimony to the unique experience of Jesus.

Discipleship is an advanced stage of the life of faith resulting from a constant and dynamic indwelling presence of Jesus' words in us. This makes the disciples one with Jesus in dying to oneself and living to God, in suffering and glory. The key-note of discipleship is brotherly love realised in the Christian fellowship, which becomes a challenge for the world to acknowledge God's love revealed in Jesus Christ.

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Aspects of Discipleship in the Sermon on the Mount

“Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:20). In these words Jesus summarised the programme and content of discipleship, which he wanted to formulate and define in his celebrated discourse, commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. The Fathers of the Church were themselves fascinated by the power and sublimity of ideas contained in this discourse, and Tertullian called it ‘the summary of the whole gospel’. With his characteristic bent on presenting Jesus as a *didaskalos*, Matthew has presented the basic teaching about discipleship in five major discourses¹, all of them analysing the various aspects of following Jesus and being in the kingdom of God. Of these five discourses the Sermon on the Mount contains the most penetrating analysis of discipleship and the scope of this study is to highlight some salient features of this discourse.

1. The man that needs God

Jesus was speaking to the disciples; the crowds were around them. As he had to explain something very important and official, he sat down. So was the custom among the Rabbis when they had to teach their disciples.² Jesus sat down, with his eyes turned to the disciples and the crowds. Then he opened his mouth and thereby he opened his heart as well. It is his heart’s throbs and yearnings that he has to share with them. It is not a recreation club. Jesus communicates his whole personality through his words; he reveals whatever he has to say and that too with seriousness and serenity.

1. The five major discourses are: (1) The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7), (2) the missionary discourse (Mt 10), (3) the parable discourse (Mt 13), (4) the community discourse (Mt 18), and (5) the eschatological discourse (Mt 24-25).

2. So we have in Mk 9:35 Jesus sitting down to give an official teaching to disciples about the nature of greatness.

The most striking idea with which Jesus begins his analysis of discipleship is the need of the poverty of the spirit (Mt 5:3). The phrase very probably echoes Is 61:1 (cf. Lk 4:18) where the anointed one is to preach "Good News" to the poor. At the time when Jesus was preaching the phrase designated the poor class which constituted the vast majority of the population of the Hellenistic - Roman world. In later OT literature and in the literature of Judaism the name of this class, *anawim* or *aniyyim*, became almost a technical term for devout and observant Jews.³ Matthew works on this expression and calls them 'poor in spirit' thereby meaning people who are aware of their lowly condition. Their poor situation did not allow them the arrogance and assertiveness of the wealthy but imposed habitual deference and spirit of dependence.

Through the eight beatitudes Jesus describes the various aspects of this 'poverty of the spirit' that should characterize every disciple of the kingdom. The reward of these different aspects varies; but ultimately they are all related to being in the kingdom and becoming members of the kingdom. What underlies all these qualities is that they reveal in one form or other the readiness of the disciple to depend on God and on God alone. The disciple is not one who seizes the kingdom by himself; he is not one who claims it as a reward. Rather he accepts it as a gift and Good News of salvation. It is this attitude of gratitude towards the gift received that should mark every disciple. He must feel and experience that he needs God. Taken in this sense the beatitudes are the challenging words of Jesus which on the one hand demand absolute interior dispositions and on the other hand promise blessedness and happiness. Only one who is daring can accept the challenge of self-emptying and expect to enjoy the blessedness that ensues from it.

2. The inwardness of discipleship

The emphasis on interior disposition as the hallmark of discipleship is further explained by Jesus through the homely metaphors of salt as seasoning and the lamp that was used in

3. The sublime picture of the *anawim* of God occurs in Zeph 3:12-13 who later became the recipients of God's Good News in Trito-Isaiah (Is 61:1-3).

the one-room house of the Palestinian peasant. The conclusion of the two images is that the disciples should produce 'good works' and enable men to see the manifestation of the goodness of their "Father who is in heaven" – and should praise God because of what they see. It could be that in the original teaching both these metaphors were positive without any hint about the salt losing its saltiness and the lamp put under the bushel. Jesus spoke in the positive, asking the disciples to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The disciples have to be exercising their role in the world and in humanity in such a way that they give taste and light to them. In the OT salt symbolized the permanent character of Israel's relationship to Yahweh (Lev 2:13). The Rabbis compared the Thora to salt in food. The disciple must stimulate a taste for the Good News in others and so preserve them. The Jews had also considered the Thora and the Temple the light of the world (Is 2:2-5; Bar 4:2). In Jesus' teaching the disciple has to take up that task of illumining the whole world, a function which he has to carry out as the follower of Christ who is himself the light of the world (Jn 8:12).

The salt and the light fulfil their function from their own inwardness. It is nothing external to them, nothing accidental to them. The constituting characteristic of a disciple is that he has to produce good works from within himself thereby enabling others to raise their hearts in praise to their Father in heaven. It may be noted that the "good works" referred to here are not only ethically good works but also aesthetically good works.⁴ The beauty and charm of life must be exhibited in his life and actions. Discipleship is not a call to puritanism and prudery, but a mission of transforming the world. That is why Jesus asked his disciples engaged in fasting to wash their face and comb their hair (Mt 6:17).

4. In Greek there are two words for *good*: *agathos* and *kalos*. The former means something good in quality, whereas the latter means something which is not only good but also beautiful and attractive. The word used by Jesus is *kalos*. It is the goodness that attracts and fascinates. There must be a charm in the Christian goodness which makes it a loving thing.

The inwardness of discipleship goes a step further when Jesus demands that his disciple should go deep into the meaning of the Law. Jesus came to bring the Law and the prophets to fulfilment and he wants his disciple to understand the profound implications of the Law (5:17-20). It is not at all a question of doing or not doing. Jesus does not want to qualify anyone as his disciple for observing the letter of Law. He wants him to imbibe the spirit of the Law and that means going to the very basic understanding of the Law. From what Jesus said and did nobody should draw the conclusion that he is an advocate of anarchy and indiscipline. He does not even approve of anyone leading an indisciplined life and teaching others to do so (Mt 5:12). What he wants is that his disciple should understand the meaning of the Law and practise it on the basis of that understanding.

The challenge and dynamism of this inwardness of discipleship is brought out through six antitheses, all of them demanding that the disciple should characterise himself by perfect integrity and altruism. It may be worth noting that of the six antitheses through which Jesus analyses the demands of discipleship, five are basically related to interpersonal relationship.⁵ Even the teaching on swearing (5:33-7) ultimately has an interpersonal dimension in so far as we bring in swearing as a precaution against human tendency to lying and here Jesus exhorts his disciple to prove his trustworthiness through the integrity of his character and not through the swearing he attaches to his words. So Jesus says: "Say 'Yes', if you mean 'Yes' and say 'No' if you mean 'No'" (5:37).

3. Spirit versus Letter

St. Paul is known for his constant fight with the Judaizers who held fast to the letter and left the spirit behind. Looking into the various teachings about discipleship given by Jesus we can very well gather the impression that it was Jesus himself who is responsible for this contrast, if not in so many words,

5. They are: the teaching on murder (5:21-26), adultery (5:27-30), divorce (5:31-32), revenge (5:38-42) and hatred of enemies (5:43-48).

at least in its fundamental principle. The way in which Jesus was explaining the meaning of the Law shows very clearly that he tried to redeem the spirit of the law from its dead letter. The teaching on murder is a good example (5:21-25). The commandment "Not to Kill" does not only mean that one should not destroy another's life, but also that the personality of each one should be respected even in small matters. Getting angry with someone, calling some one 'fool' or 'idiot' are all expressions of lack of respect. A disciple should learn to respect others and this entails the control of our thoughts, words and actions. This respect for others should go to the extent of the disciple taking the initiative to get reconciled with his brother if he happens to remember that the brother has something against him (5:23-24).

The love of enemies is perhaps the most challenging area where the spirit has to overcome the letter. The commandment of the OT demanded that every Israelite should love his neighbour (Lev 19:18). But in later Judaism the concept of 'neighbour' was restricted to the other Jews and consequently all the non-Jews were considered non-neighbours and enemies. The attitude towards them was one of hatred. Though there was no law prescribing hatred towards the enemies, in practice it was so, especially because the non-Jews were considered God's enemies. The Sectarians of Qumran reflect the same view-point. The Pharisees interpreted the command to love one's neighbour as applying only to Jews - the *goyim* (Gentiles) need not be loved.

For Jesus the whole approach is wrong. There is no one who can be excluded from the concept of 'neighbour'. There is no one who can be called 'enemy'. The basis of his argument does not start from below, but from above. It is not based on conventions and practices here below, but on reasons as strong as the laws of nature. In one moment, for Jesus, the creator-God becomes a Father-God. God, the creator of the world, the one who governs it and sustains it, is himself the Father. He acts in such a way that he stands above petty considerations and selfish motivations. He makes his sun to shine on bad and good people alike and gives rain to those who do good and to those who do evil (5:45). It is the broad-mindedness and large-heartedness of the Father that should serve as a model for the disciple. The fundamental fact that the creator-God is at the same time

the Father-God compels us to change all our attitudes towards God and towards our fellowmen. If God is also our Father, it naturally follows that we are all children of God and not merely creatures. If we are all children of God, the natural conclusion is that we are all brothers and sisters among ourselves. In that case the very possibility of hatred is out of question. More than being a neighbour, everyone is a brother or a sister to the other. It is but natural that brothers and sisters love each other and do good to each other.

By this large-heartedness and broad-mindedness the disciple begins to imitate the Father. He is already the child of the Father; but he has still to become that. It all happens as the result of a certain tenderness and sympathy, simplicity and straight-forwardness. It is all a question of transcending the apparent and the transient and fixing our eyes on higher motives. There is something radical about it and it makes the disciple to stand high above the human way of doing and reacting. The concrete expression of this transcendence of the disciple over the human and the temporal is given in the statement: "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). Someone would object: "How can anyone be perfect as the heavenly Father?" The objection can be solved, once we understand the meaning of the Greek word translated 'perfect'. The disciple is asked to be *teleios* as the heavenly Father is *teleios*. The meaning of the word *teleios* here is 'mature'. A person can be mature physiologically as well as psychologically and spiritually. Here it is question of a spiritual and psychological maturity through which the disciple stands above his tendency to narrow-mindedness by loving not only those who love him, but also others as well. The maturity of the Father is such that he does not go by such considerations. He is broad-minded and large-hearted. It is possible that in Aramaic, the language which Jesus used while speaking to his disciples, the word for perfect is *tamima* meaning 'simple' and 'straight-forward'. It connotes a person who is not complex and crooked. He is someone like Nathanael (Jn 1:47). The disciple of Jesus must be characterized by the same simplicity and transparency.

4. The disciple and his practice of righteousness

In 6:1-18 Jesus expands the idea of christian righteousness as contrasted with the righteousness as practised by the Scribes and the Pharisees (5:20). In Judaism righteousness consisted of three basic practices: almsgiving, prayer and fasting. In each instance an antithesis is drawn between the spurious piety of display and the genuine piety, which seeks to conceal itself. The disciple of Jesus should be characterised by genuine piety. In his attempt to establish christian discipleship above the prevailing concept of discipleship in Judaism, Jesus analyses the problems and drawbacks in the exercise of religion. Jesus contrasts a true disciple with a hypocrite, the latter word originally meaning 'an actor'. A hypocrite is a person who makes a theatre around himself to be watched and appreciated by the onlookers.⁶ The actors on the stage seek only applause and recognition. So too the disciple engaged in a theatre performance of religion is hailed as a virtuous man and that is sufficient reward for those who seek recognition; he obtains what he seeks and that is all he deserves.

The underlying idea is once again the awareness a disciple should have that he is the son of the Father and not wage-earner. The alms he gives, the prayers he recites, and the fasting he undertakes must be all expressions of his relationship to God as Father. The children would never bother about impressing upon the Father through ostentatious performance. For them the relationship is one based on love and concern. If he gives alms, it is because he loves the Father and in that love sees the poor as his brother and sister; if he prays it is because he feels the need of relating himself to God in an attitude of love and joy; if he fasts, it is because he wants to exercise his capacity to transcend his moorings to this world through an act of sacrificing his basic need of food and drink.

5. The undivided heart of a disciple

Jesus tells his disciple how he should have an undivided heart, a heart not torn between two loyalties and two entirely

6. The word *theathenai* (6:1) translated 'to be seen' is related to the word *theatron*, translated theatre.

opposed objects. First of all it is a question of treasures. Taking the imagery of the Palestinian situation of the peasants digging up the ground and burying the money, Jesus illustrates how unsafe and foolish it is for a disciple to store up treasures here on earth. He would be like the rich fool of the parable about whom Jesus made the remark: "This is how it is with those who pile up treasures for themselves and are not rich in God's sight" (Lk 12:21). What Jesus reprimands here is not the having of earthly goods as such; he forbids his disciple to have his 'treasure' here on earth. A treasure is something which one considers most dear and most valued, to obtain which one would sell everything he has (Mt 13:44). The disciple lives here on earth and for that he needs earthly goods. But his real treasure should not be here; it must be in heaven as part of his whole life orientation. If his treasure is in heaven, his heart too will be there, the heart being the very centre of his personality.

A disciple characterised by this genuine and authentic orientation of life will have no need to worry about anything. The one thing that Jesus condemns in his disciple is a tendency to worry and anxiety (*merimna*) (6:25). Anxiety is the expression of insecurity and it is what contradicts the very quality of discipleship as a life of perfect security. The reason is again because God is his Father. The same Father who sends his rain and makes his sun rise on the good and the bad people alike, is also one who knows that his children need food and drink as well as clothing and protection. It is a God who provides for the plant life and the animal life, forms of life much inferior to that of man, but important before God. It is not all a call to passivity and laziness on the part of the disciple, it is an invitation to perfect trust and confidence in the Father. Through anxiety nobody gains anything, nobody can live a bit longer by worrying about it (6:27). The nature and the irrational creatures are perhaps our better teachers than all the knowledge and sophisticated theology we have built up.

It seems Jesus hints at this singleness of purpose and dedication to the service of God in the story of Martha and Mary. What was wrong with Martha was not that she worked while Mary prayed; rather it was that Martha was worried and

troubled (Lk 10:41). She could not concentrate; she was distracted and dissipated and in her heart she was disintegrated. Mary chose the right thing and the right course of action.⁷ She devoted herself to God's word; she took refuge in it and had her treasure in it. Consequently she had no worry, no anxiety. The one thing necessary chosen by her made her tranquil and serene and Jesus recommends this woman to all his followers.

6. Eschatological orientation of christian discipleship

Discipleship as envisaged by Jesus has both existential and eschatological dimensions. It is rooted here in this life, but it is moving towards its eschatological fulfilment and realisation. Consequently, it has to be influenced by both these dimensions and one dimension should cross-fertilise the other. The kingdom of God, of which the follower of Jesus is a disciple, is at the same time an earthly and eschatological reality. Consequently the disciple must pattern his life to suit both these dimensions at the same time. In the earlier part of the discourse Jesus has been emphasising the inner and existential aspects of discipleship, how the disciple has to form his attitudes and exercise his personality in pursuit of a superior righteousness. Towards the end of the discourse the language of Jesus takes on an eschatological slant and, as such, the tone becomes strong and demanding.

Thus Jesus' teaching on judging others, though it has an existential dimension, has perhaps more eschatological overtones, especially because the concept of judgement (*krisis*) has this eschatological character. The disciple is asked to keep away from judging others so that he may not have to face the condemnation of the final judgement. Jesus forbids his disciple to judge others, because he shall be judged by his own criteria,

7. The lesson of this story about Martha and Mary may be compared with the demands of discipleship in the Indian tradition. In the Indian tradition a disciple is to be characterised by *sradha* and *kriya*, faith and attention followed by action. In the case of Martha it was that she had *kriya* (action) without *sradha* (attention) and that resulted in the distraction and anxiety.

because he is incapable of passing a truly objective judgement, and above all because all men are brothers and sisters. By a hyperbole the 'beam' in one's own eye is contrasted with the 'splinter' in another's eye. This may be a popular proverb applied to the Gospel. Acute observance of the faults of others combined with complacency with one's own character is the object to many common place proverbs in all languages. This is the attitude of the 'actors' (hypocrites).

Another teaching where the eschatological overtone is evident is Jesus' exhortation to enter by the narrow gate. Now that the disciple has chosen to follow Jesus, it is his duty to take life with seriousness and not to become lethargic and apathetic. It is all a question of choosing the hard way and the narrow gate. The disciple may start with hard way and the narrow gate, but the chances are that he may give it up and look for the wide gate and the easy way. The life of the disciple is a continuous choice and a recurring option. A decision made in the past may not always ensure its vitality in the present. The contrast between the many who go by the easy way and the wide gate and the few who find the narrow gate and the hard way illustrates how demanding it is to remain a disciple.⁸

The test of a true disciple having chosen the hard way and the narrow gate is the type of fruits he produces. The true test of the disciple is his very life. If he leads a bad life he can only produce bad fruit; if he is a poor tree he cannot bear good fruit. The eschatological tone of this warning is brought out by repeating the preaching of John the Baptist about bad trees: "Any tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire" (7:19; cf. 3:10).

The primitive Church expressed its faith in Christ through the confession 'Jesus is Lord'.³ But this confession alone does not guarantee that one is a genuine disciple. He may have exercised his charisms of prophecy and exorcism as well as thaumaturgy; but it will not substitute the demands of discipleship

8. The saying echoes the rather common teaching of the two spirits and the two ways found in IQS 3:20-21; *Didache* 1:1-6:2 and *Ep. Barnabae* 18:1-21:9.

which involves doing what the Father in heaven wants him to do (7:21). The saying is directed at false disciples within the Christian community towards the end of the first century.

Conclusion

The discourse on discipleship ends with the parable of the two houses. The words of Jesus are a call and a challenge to action; they are not mere teaching, and understanding them is an insufficient response. The challenge is serious; failure to meet it is followed by catastrophe. The solid foundation on which the disciple builds up his future guarantees security whereas the easy and facile way of handling one's discipleship results in complete caricature. "What a terrible fall that was", only so could Jesus express his astonishment and surprise at the good start and the unhappy end.

The teaching of Jesus about discipleship developed in the Sermon on the Mount is a permanent reminder to each and every disciple down through the history of the Church. St. Matthew used his skill and literary creativity to give to the words of Jesus a theological and spiritual framework in which he could develop the various aspects of christian discipleship without destroying in the least the originality and challenge of his words. As such, it is the call to a higher and superior righteousness the like of which we do not find in the OT or in Judaism.

Paul Disciple and Apostle of Christ

Of all the New Testament writers, it is perhaps Paul alone who very relevantly and in clear terms brings home to us what it means to be a Christian or disciple of Christ. Paul's encounter and personal experience was not with the Jesus of Nazareth in his earthly life, but with the glorified Jesus, after his death and resurrection. Our Christian experience also is concerned with the same risen Lord. We may say, therefore, that what Paul has to say about himself as a disciple and apostle of Christ can be basically applied with equal validity and force to all Christians, who are called to the same vocation.

Discipleship, a call

Time and again Paul stresses the fact that to be a disciple of Christ or a Christian is a call from God. It is God who in his love takes the initiative and calls man, be he a Jew or a Gentile, to the new life in Christ (Rom. 8:30; 1 Cor. 1:19; Gal. 1:6,15; Eph. 4:1,4; Col. 3:15; 1 Thes. 2:12; etc.). Of course, it is up to man whether to respond to this call of God or to reject it. In that sense it is his personal choice. But to be a Christian, according to Paul, is never a matter of man's own achievement. It is not, so to say, becoming a follower of a set of certain moral or religious principles or an adherent of a certain speculative, ascetical or social doctrine that makes one a Christian. Paul's concept of a Christian goes far beyond this merely external following or imitation of Christ. It means the living Christ entering man's personal life, taking possession of man's innermost being and transforming him into a 'new creature' (2 Cor. 5:17). This is beyond man's own resources or capabilities. It is the work of God's grace, His initiative and effective action. He calls man to this supernatural life and man responds in faith, in personal self-surrender to receive this new life as a gift from God.

Paul's own experience

The story of Paul's own vocation to Christianity bears out the above point. To the puzzling question how Paul the Pharisee, most zealous persecutor of Christianity, suddenly became the greatest disciple and apostle of Christ, Paul would answer unequivocally that the change was due not to any gradual process of maturing or some spiritual crisis, but "solely to the free and sovereign act of God", his grace. Paul says in Gal. 1:15f. "... he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me. in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles..."

As a Pharisee Paul was hoping to obtain salvation through his observance of the Law. He thought that he could obtain deliverance from sin which separated man from a holy God, and reconciliation with God and righteousness and immortal life through his good works, his own efforts. But in the encounter with the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus Paul knew that 'salvation is of the Lord', that it begins on the divine side with an act of pure grace which man has done nothing to deserve. In and through the person of the risen Christ, God offered to Paul the salvation which he longed for, viz. the forgiveness of sins, 'divinization' through the Holy Spirit. Paul accepted the divine gift in self-surrender to God in Christ, and thus began his new life as a Christian, as a disciple and apostle of Christ.

Paul a disciple

What does it mean according to Paul, to be a disciple of Christ? In other words, what is the identity of a Christian? Paul gives the answer in various ways, but they all basically come to mean that to be a Christian is to enter into a personal union with Jesus Christ.

The phrase most often used by Paul to express this union is "in Christ". It means the close, vital union of Christ and the Christian, an inclusion or incorporation that connotes a symbiosis of the two. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). This vital union can also be expressed as 'Christ in me': "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). In other words, when a Christian speaks of

living, he does not mean himself, his natural being. He has no longer a separate existence. He is merged in Christ. There are also at times ecclesial dimensions to the phrase "in Christ" (Eph. 1:10; Gal. 1:22). The Christian so incorporated in Christ is actually a member of the Body of Christ; he is part of the whole Christ. The phrase, in the words of A. Deissmann, means "the most intimate fellowship imaginable of the Christian with the living spiritual Christ". The result is that one belongs to Christ (2 Cor. 10:7) or is "of Christ"- a 'mystical genitive' that often expresses the same idea.

We notice that, according to Paul, a Christian who is "in Christ" does not live in an isolated, exclusive union with Christ away from others. The Christian vocation, by its very nature, is ecclesial, communitarian: A Christian is called by God "into the *koinōnia* of his son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). *koinōnia* means fellowship, communion, participation. Paul uses the term to designate the vital union of the believers among themselves that arises from their union with Christ. In 1 Cor. 10:16-17, Paul makes it clear that the Eucharist, which the Christians celebrate together, is a vivid expression and cause (nourishment) of this oneness of Christians with Christ superseding all barriers of caste and creed, colour and sex. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one person in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). To be a Christian is to be a member of the new People of God, of which Christ is the living and regnant Head.

Paul addresses the Christians as "brothers" and "saints". Christians are genuinely so. They are people graced by God through the immanence in Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They belong to the inner sphere of God's life. In that sense they are "saints", consecrated to God. Through their faith-baptism commitment they have been washed clean of all their sins, and have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, the self-gift God's own life. Thus, being 'divinized' by the grace of God they can all call God 'Abba, Father!', a thing which Jesus alone could dare to do. Christians, then, sharing in this divine sonship in Christ can genuinely call each other brothers and sisters. All become members of one family through their incorporation.

into Christ by faith-baptism, and all social, cultural or racial differences fade into insignificance. If this identity of the Christian vocation is lived seriously, Christians should be able to revolutionize and transform the whole world.

This life in Christ is the life of grace, in which a Christian stands (Rom. 5:2), living in a new real - "the Kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13), as an adopted son of God (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15). With the power of the risen Jesus acting in him, he experiences in himself liberation from the power of sin, the fear of death and the bondage to law. His life as a Christian is the new Spirit-led life of moral progress, peace and joy - at once *Gabe* and *Aufgabe* - gift and task. This takes us to Paul's idea of Christian living.

Christian ethic

As some one has beautifully said: In the New Testament religion is grace, and ethics is gratitude. This is obviously true of St. Paul. For him 'gratitude is the correlative of grace' and upon this gratitude his whole Christian ethic is grounded. It is the '*Noblesse oblige*', the 'imperative' flowing from the 'indicative': our response in Christian living to the wonderful kindness of God to sinners in Christ. As C. H. Dodd points out, the imperatives or hortatives in Paul are for driving home the need for working out ethically all that is involved in being "in Christ". The maxim all through is: *Werde das was Du bist* ('Become what you are'). Paul's language varies. In Eph. 4:1 it is: "I beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling"; in Phil. 1:27; "Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ"; in Col. 3:1; "If you then are risen with Christ, seek the things that are above". In fact, a Christian who is led by the Spirit, *kata pneuma*, produces these good works as the spontaneous expression or consequence of his new life in Christ. Hence they are called the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22f). In short, speaking about Pauline ethic, A. M. Hunter remarks: "For Paul Christian goodness is 'grace' goodness. It is the goodness and love of the risen Christ operative in him through the Spirit" (Gal. 2:20).

According to Paul, the cultural or social status of a Christian is of secondary importance. He says in 1 Cor. 7:24; "In whatever

state each was called, there let him remain with God". "For in Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith expressing itself through love" (Gal. 5:6). Since for a Christian "to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21) and it is Christ who lives in him and acts in him (Gal. 2:20), his whole life should be a manifestation of the life of Christ himself, who "came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45). Therefore, Paul expects his Christians to make love (*agapē*) their aim (1 Cor. 14:1). They are called to freedom, but they should "through love be servants of one another" (Gal. 5:13). Bearing one another's burdens, they should thus fulfil the law of Christ (Gal. 5:2). Their Christian liberty should in no way become a stumbling block to the weak brethren (1 Cor. 8:9). "If food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat lest I cause my brother to fall" (1 Cor. 8:13). A Christian should know that all the spiritual gifts (*charismata*), gratuitously bestowed on him by the Spirit, are for the service (*diakonia*) of the community, for the upbuilding of the neighbour (1 Cor. 12-14). In short, Paul exhorts the Christian: "whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offence to Jews or to Greeks or to the Church of God, just as I try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 10:31-11:1). He reminds the Christians of Rome: "Each of us must consider his neighbour and think what is for his good and will build up the common life. For Christ too did not consider himself.... In a word, accept one another as Christ accepted us, to the glory of God" (Rom. 15:2, 3, 7).

This is the picture we get of Paul, the disciple of Christ, through his personal reflections or exhortations to his Christian brethren. It is a life of intimate and personal union with the living Christ, a life of being a son of God, sharing his life through the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit, a life which manifests itself in Christ-like love towards others, a life which will reach its culmination in total 'glorification' by the grace of God.

Paul, an apostle

Paul preached to all what he had experienced in Christ: His great desire was to share this good news with everybody: that the one and the same God of both Jews and Gentiles had revealed Himself fully in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and that He was calling everyone to salvation in and through Christ (Col. 1:15-20; 2:9; Rom. 3:21ff).

Paul says very emphatically: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16). And this he calls as a commission he has been entrusted with. He often states at the beginning of his letters that he is an *apostle of Christ Jesus* (cf. Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; etc.). He is an apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father (Gal. 1:1). The grace of apostleship was not of his own choosing. He was *called* to be an apostle by the will of God (1 Cor. 1:1), who had set him apart before he was born, and called him through His grace (Gal. 1:15).

Paul always associated his apostolic commission with his Damascus experience, when the risen Lord appeared to him and gave him the commission to preach (1 Cor. 9:1; 15:7-9; Gal. 1:15-16). As scholars observe, this meant for Paul that from now on he was "a commissioned emissary", a legate or envoy sent by the risen Jesus in his own name, to represent him and act for him with full power.

That Paul took his commission as the apostle of Jesus Christ most seriously and with a single-minded dedication, is obvious both from his own letters as well as from the account of his preaching activity in Acts. The intensity of his devotion to the risen Lord became commensurate with his erstwhile opposition to him and his own. In fact, Paul strikes us as the apostle who carried the good news of Christ Jesus to the ends of the earth (cf. Rom. 15:19; Acts. 13-28).

Paul's own letters bear testimony to the fact that he was ready to sacrifice anything for the sake of the gospel: "For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I may win the more. To the Jews I became

as a Jew, in order to win Jews... To those outside the law I became as one outside the law... that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Cor. 9:19-23).

In 2 Cor. 11:23-29 Paul himself gives a vivid picture of his innumerable sufferings in the course of his apostolic ministry. Added to these was the daily pressure upon him of his anxiety for all the churches. "Who is weak and I am not Weak? Who is made to fall and I am not weak? Who is made to fall and I am not indignant?". And though he was proud of what Christ had wrought through him to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum he had fully preached the gospel of Christ (Rom. 15:18-19), he was fully conscious that it was all because of the grace of God acting in him (1 Cor. 15:10): "By the grace of God I am what I am".

This great Paul, who could be genuinely called the *seliah* of Christ, *representing* Christ, and who could boast in the Lord saying, God's grace towards him was not in vain (1 Cor. 15:10), knew, however, that he carried "this treasure in an earthen vessel", to show that the transcendent power belonged to God and not to him (2 Cor. 4:7). He says quite frankly: "I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

In 2 Cor. 4:8-11, Paul speaks about his experiences as an apostle: "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh". The same letter, second Corinthians, lays before us the great personality of the apostle: mystic, thinker,

organizer, controversialist, man of action, yet one whose remarkable talents have in no way obscured but rather brought into clearer relief his lovable human qualities. Sensitive, ardent, passionate, he can boast without pride, feel jealousy without resentment, hate without malice, and love without self-interest. When he boldly proposes himself as a model for our imitation, it is no idle boast, but the spontaneous testimony of his intimate union with Christ.

This, then, is the great Paul, chosen, and called by God to play an essential role in the history of Christianity: a true disciple and apostle of Christ, who *knew* Christ, who had been transformed into Christ, for whom life was Christ (Phil. 1:21), and who preached what he lived, spending his life even unto death, bringing both Jews and Gentiles to the *knowledge* of God in Christ.

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Book-Review

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Alwaye : Pontifical Institute of Theology and Philosophy,

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The book of Psalms is rightly an integral part of the prayer life of every Jew and Christian. In these prayers written and sung on different occasions during the centuries one can see a humble human being pouring out his or her heart before Yahweh without any inhibitions or pretensions, without even caring to search out pleasing and refined words and expressions; here is unadulterated spontaneous prayer. There are also the prayers of the community which give to the different aspirations and feelings of the people of God. Without some preparation one cannot simply open the book of psalms and begin praying from the first to the 150th psalm even though they are all inspired prayers which the chosen people of God have been using for millenniums. This is what Fr. Luke seem to do in *Israel Before Yahweh* which is written in a scientific way without any technical jargons. He brings out all the theological and spiritual treasures contained in the psalms he has chosen.

The author, in his preface, speaks about the fourfold tasks he has undertaken to interpret the psalms and he has applied them in his commentary with success. The ample notes at the end give one enough opportunity for further studies.

There are some sixteen psalms selected and analysed by the author and this reviewer has been specially attracted to psalm 137 which is really "one of the most beautiful and touching poetical creations of ancient Israel" (p. 166). As part of the Bible we have to understand this psalm in its historical, literary and theological contexts. But as a prayer we have to see if it can be made 'our prayer' or 'my prayer'. The psalm could be seen as a cry for justice, but which is very much limited to this life on earth. We see this psalm with the idea of a progressive revelation in which we move from the imperfect to the perfect. The book of psalms is an Old Testament book and it has its own limitations and we live in the New Testament times which has given us a higher sense of God, man, morality, justice etc. We understand the psalms and accept them as part of the Bible. But does that mean that all the psalms must be or could be prayed by us today?

We should be very grateful to Fr. Luke for such an excellent book which enlightens us so much and is made available to us at such reasonable price. We are glad to hear that he is preparing some other books also on the psalms.

G. Kaniarakath

Two New Indian Doctors in Bible

Fr. Paul Kariamadam V. C., has obtained a Doctoral degree from the Pontifical Biblical Institute of Rome for his dissertation on "The Travel Narrative" (Lk 18:31-19:46). It is a redaction critical investigation to find out the theological depth of the central section of Luke as also to find a possible answer to the question where the Lucan travel narrative ended. Fr. Paul has made a substantial contribution to our understanding of the Gospel of Luke.

Fr. Paul Kalluveettil, C.M.I., in his dissertation has made a scientific study of the "Declaration Formulae in Old Testament Secular Covenants". It is an investigation on the nature and function of oral declarations of relationship in secular covenant contexts.

An introductory part specifies the O. T. concept of the covenant and shows that *bərīth* is not the exclusive word for covenant. Words like *ntn*, *yād*, *hzq bkn̄p*, *massēkā*, 'sh bərāka, 'ād / ēdūt, *hōzeh* / *hāzūt*, *nāhah*, *dābār*, *smd*, *salom*, *hesed*, *tōb* / *tōbā*, *mn̄h*, *hbr*, *yhd* are synonyms. There are also non-synonym texts which refer to covenants between king and people, covenants of vassalage, marriage alliances, and social and tribal pacts. Part II studies the covenant declaration formulae in the Ancient Near Eastern documents. Five types of formulae are identified and described: a generic formula "We all one", and four specific formulae which define the nature of the bond: "vassal-lord", "father-son", "brother", and "friend-ally". These oral declarations are used to effect a new relationship or to reaffirm the existing bond or to re-establish a broken covenant. The existence of the forms related to the covenant declaration formulae are noted: "Royal Formula" (PN = proper name) is king", legal formulae, e. g., of adoption, slavery, service and marriage. Part III studies in detail two types of the O. T. covenant declaration formulae: Vassal: Jos 9:8; 2Kg 16:7; 10:5; I Sml 27:12. Brother: I Kg 20:31-34. The function of these formulae (except I Sml 27:12) is to establish a covenant relationship. I Sml 27:12 serves to confirm the existing covenant. Most of the texts do not refer to any other covenant enacting rites. A third type of formula, "We all one" (I Kg 22:4 = 2 Kg 3:7) is dealt with in summary form. The O. T. also has traces of formulae concerning kingship (2 Kg 9:13), adoption (Ps 2:7), marriage (Hos 2:4), and slavery (Gen 44:16).

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